



Washington State Fusion Center INFOCUS



FRIDAY — 9 SEP 2022

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Events, Opportunities

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HEADLINE	09/08 Mysterious deaths Russian oligarchs
SOURCE	https://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20220908-the-mysterious-deaths-of-russian-oligarchs
GIST	<p>Last week, on 1 September, Ravil Maganov joined a long list of Russian oligarchs and businessmen who died under mysterious circumstances since Russia launched its invasion of Ukraine on 24 February. Here are brief descriptions of seven of these departing oligarchs.</p> <p>Ravil Maganov: Jumping into the Void</p> <p>Maganov, 67, was the chairman of the board of directors and founder, in 1991, of the oil giant Lukoil. He</p>

died at Moscow Central Hospital on 1 September. There were several contradictory versions about his death. The official news agencies Tass and Interfax reported that Maganov committed suicide by jumping from the sixth-floor room of the institution where he was being treated for an undisclosed ailment. Lukoil said in a statement that he died “after a serious illness.” When questioned, the Kremlin spokesperson, Dmitri Peskov, refused to comment. Lukoil was among the few companies to speak out against the war in Ukraine.

Yuri Voronov: A Bullet to the Head

On Monday, 4 July, the body of Yuri Voronov was found floating, lifeless with a bullet in his head, in the swimming pool of his mansion, located in the upscale suburbs of St. Petersburg. The gun with which he was shot was found on the floor of the pool. The 61-year-old oligarch worked with Gazprom, the Russian gas giant, of which the state is the majority shareholder. The local commission of inquiry said the death was the result of a “Dispute with business partners.”

Alexander Subbotin: Toad Poisoning

On 8 May, a former general manager of Lukoil, Alexander Subbotin, died in a shaman’s cellar in a suburb of Moscow. He was poisoned with toad venom. According to the British newspaper *The Independent*, the 43-year-old Subbotin, under the influence of alcohol and drugs, went to see shaman Magua Flores. Flores allegedly cut Subbotin’s skin and then injected him with the venom into it. The authorities said that in the months before his death, Subbotin was suffering from heart discomfort.

Vladislav Avayev, Sergey Protosenya: Death in the Family

On 18 April, the former vice-president of Gazprombank, the bank of the Russian gas company, died in his Moscow apartment. The apartment was locked from the inside. Avayev, who was close to Putin in the Kremlin, was found with a gun in his hand. His pregnant wife and his daughter were on the floor at his side, both shot dead. The authorities said that a family dispute prompted Avayev to kill both of them before killing himself.

The next day, Sergey Protosenya, former manager of Novatek, the second largest Russian gas producer, was found hanged in the garden of his villa in Lloret de Mar, Spain. The police found the bodies of his wife and daughter inside the villa, both stabbed to death.

Alexander Tulyakov, Mikhail Watford: Hanged in the Garage

On 25 February 2022, the day after launching of the invasion of Ukraine, Alexander Tulyakov, 61, a senior Gazprom executive, was found hanged in the garage of his house near St. Petersburg. The police officers dispatched to the scene were asked by the Gazprom security services to leave the premises.

On 28 February, Mikhail Watford, a Ukrainian-born Russian oligarch, was also discovered hanged in the garage of his home in Surrey County. His gardener found the body. Tulyakov, 66, had made his fortune in the energy sector after the fall of the Soviet Union.

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HEADLINE	09/08 Coal power falls: prices soar, China slows
SOURCE	https://www.wsj.com/articles/global-coal-fired-power-generation-falls-as-prices-soar-and-china-slows-11662656704?mod=hp_listc_pos2
GIST	<p>SINGAPORE—Global coal-fired power generation fell by 1.2% during the first half of 2022 from a year earlier, according to an analysis of energy consumption data, as a sharp economic slowdown in China and a surge in global coal prices after Russia’s invasion of Ukraine crimped demand.</p> <p>Meanwhile, power generation from renewable sources increased 17% year-over-year in the first half, led by capacity increases in the U.S. and China, according to a report published Thursday by S&P Global Commodity Insights, a market research firm.</p>

The two concurrent developments mean that global emissions fell by about 1% in the first half of 2022, even as power demand increased by 2.5% and European nations turned to coal in a bid [to wean themselves off Russian natural gas](#).

“The drop in emissions may seem surprising given the popular narrative that focuses on fossil energy security, but in reality it is quite straightforward—high fuel prices lead to less demand,” said Xizhou Zhou, Washington-based vice president at S&P Global Commodity Insights.

Developments in China, which accounts for more than half of global coal consumption, had perhaps [the largest impact](#).

Coal-fired power generation had been expected [to grow 4.1% in China](#) from 2021 through 2024, according to the International Energy Agency. But in the first half of the year, the world’s second-largest economy sputtered amid renewed Covid-19 restrictions and a slump in the real-estate sector, causing economists to sharply downgrade their growth expectations for the year.

That has made global coal-consumption forecasts difficult. “The main uncertainty here is China,” said Mr. Zhou. While the International Energy Agency said in its latest forecast that a Chinese recovery in the second half of the year could push global coal consumption up by 0.7% in 2022, that scenario is growing increasingly unlikely as Beijing sticks with its strict Covid controls and refrains from large-scale stimulus.

Meanwhile, many European countries turned to coal after the February [invasion of Ukraine](#), as they looked for alternatives to Russian natural gas, also [snapping up liquefied natural gas shipments](#) from the U.S. and the Middle East, pushing LNG prices to record levels.

The European Union increased coal consumption by 6.6% over the same period—an increase that was effectively offset by a 6.4% drop in the U.S. Despite Europe’s high-profile turn back to coal, the global impact is limited, since the continent accounts for just 5% of global coal consumption.

India’s coal consumption rose 10.5% in the first half of 2022, S&P analysts found, as the country expanded electrification and cranked up the air conditioning during [a prolonged spring heat wave](#).

At the same time, [coal prices surged](#) as countries shied away from Russian coal and some miners struggled to increase production, sending European and Asian coal futures to nearly triple their levels before the war in Ukraine.

In China, the energy mix also shifted toward cleaner sources, helping to lower carbon-dioxide emissions. Although China’s overall power generation increased by 3.7% in the first half of the year, the share of energy produced from coal-fired power plants fell by 2.6%, according to Carbon Monitor, which tracks emissions data.

Bridging the gap were renewable sources of energy such as hydropower, which produced 20.3% more energy in the first half of the year than a year earlier, according to Carbon Monitor, which last month calculated that global carbon-dioxide emissions rose 1.4% in the first half of 2022 compared with the same period last year.

Even so, China ramped up coal consumption in July and August to meet a short-term surge in electricity demand as record droughts and heat waves in southern and central China hurt hydropower electricity generation and sent demand for air conditioning soaring.

In the longer run, sustained high prices for coal appear to be accelerating a global shift to cleaner energy sources. In Southeast Asia, half of the power projects proposed or under construction involved renewable energy, up from 21% last year, S&P said in its Thursday report, adding that several proposed coal-fired power plants had been scrapped.

	China expanded the capacity of planned wind and solar projects to 320 gigawatts this year, up from 144 gigawatts last year, S&P found.
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HEADLINE	09/08 Jobless claims fall 4th straight week
SOURCE	https://www.wsj.com/articles/u-s-jobless-claims-fall-for-fourth-straight-week-11662641304?mod=hp_major_pos2#cxrecs_s
GIST	<p>U.S. workers' filings for unemployment benefits fell for the fourth straight week last week, a sign of continued tightness in the labor market.</p> <p>Initial jobless claims, a proxy for layoffs, fell to a seasonally adjusted 222,000 last week from a revised 228,000 the previous week, the Labor Department said Thursday. Claims have been ticking down in August after moving up earlier in the summer.</p> <p>The latest claims data is consistent with other recent gauges that show the U.S. job market is strong, but cooling from earlier this year, when layoffs were even lower and hiring more robust.</p> <p>The four-week moving average, which smooths out weekly volatility, fell by 7,500 to 233,000. So far in 2022, weekly initial claims are averaging around 214,000, about the same level as the 2019 weekly average of around 218,000.</p> <p>Continuing claims, a proxy for the number of people who have been unemployed and have received benefits for more than one week increased to 1.47 million in the week ended Aug. 27 from 1.44 million the previous week. Continuing claims are reported with a one-week lag.</p> <p>The claims data comes amid signs that the labor market, while still strong, is cooling following a torrid stretch last year and earlier this year. Employers added 315,000 jobs in August, down from 526,000 in July, the Labor Department said earlier this month.</p> <p>The unemployment rate ticked up to 3.7% as more people entered the labor force and wage gains slowed. The rate, however, is just above the half-century low set before the pandemic began.</p> <p>"The fact that we haven't really seen a sharp increase in the continuing claims numbers tells you that the labor market remains pretty tight," said Stephen Stanley, chief economist at Amherst Pierpont Securities.</p> <p>Mr. Stanley said the run-up in new claims earlier this summer was likely caused by seasonal factors such as school employees leaving their jobs over the summer or auto factories closing temporarily for retooling. As those factors ebb, the number of jobless filings has declined, he said.</p> <p>Federal Reserve officials have cautioned that the labor market could weaken as they continue to raise interest rates aggressively in an effort to tame inflation. Officials have enacted 0.75 percentage point rate increases at each of their last two meetings and are poised for another rise of the same magnitude at their Sept. 20-21 policy meeting.</p> <p>In an Aug. 26 speech, Fed Chairman Jerome Powell warned that the Fed's inflation-fighting efforts would "bring some pain to households and businesses."</p> <p>Some major employers, including Ford Motor Co. and Walmart, Inc., have announced job cuts in recent weeks.</p> <p>Still, recent data from the Labor Department showed that there are almost two open positions for every unemployed worker in July, suggesting that it is still relatively easy for laid-off workers to find a new job.</p>
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HEADLINE	09/08 NHTSA: WA leads nation in car fatalities
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SOURCE	https://mynorthwest.com/3623380/washington-state-leads-country-in-car-fatalities-according-to-study/
GIST	<p>Washington has the highest number of car fatalities than any other state this year, according to a recent study by National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). This week, two DUI fatalities closed down State Route 101 and I-5 during the morning rush for hours.</p> <p>With the fatal crashes and DUI arrests on pace to surpass last year's numbers, it begs the question, what's causing this high rate of fatalities in Washington state?</p> <p>Someone working in law enforcement, who asked not to be identified, told KIRO Newsradio they think it's political.</p> <p>"We are no longer allowed to pursue someone in a car if they take off when we pull them over. We have to ask a supervisor for permission to pursue and sometimes it's a no-go."</p> <p>Knowing that creates an atmosphere where drivers think they can get away from being chased, according to the law enforcement member.</p> <p>But Pierce County Trooper Robert Reyer disagrees, stating, with supervisor permission, more times than not, troopers are quick to call and go after those who break the law.</p> <p>"The word on the street, per se, is that we are not allowed to pursue cars anymore, and that's far from the truth," Reyer said.</p> <p>This false narrative that's being spread is dangerous, according to Reyer, because fatality crashes are up in Pierce and Thurston counties. There have been 33 fatalities in Pierce and Thurston counties combined. It's set to surpass last year's number (50).</p> <p>The other law enforcement officer also notes that drivers aren't just under the influence of alcohol. For instance, the driver who reportedly caused the crash in Mason county was under the influence of methadone. DUIs for Mason County have reached 1,088 for 2021. 2022 is not available as of yet.</p> <p>The number of DUIs for 2022 has reached 1,505 compared to last year's 2,082 for Thurston and Peirce Counties.</p> <p>Another possible reason for DUIs? Drivers might not care anymore. Reyer believes drivers' behavior has changed since the start of the pandemic. The roads during the height of the pandemic were practically empty. Now roads are almost back to pre-pandemic numbers and people have lost their patience.</p> <p>Last but not least, troopers told KIRO Newsradio that they lost a lot of employees due to vaccine mandates. Because of this, state departments are short-staffed by more than 200 troopers. The lack of troopers on the street is another possible reason there are more crashes on the road.</p> <p>A class of troopers are set to graduate later this month.</p>
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HEADLINE	09/08 Downtown Seattle to rework foot traffic flow
SOURCE	https://mynorthwest.com/3622857/dsa-leads-charge-significant-facelift-third-avenue-troubling-year/
GIST	<p>The Downtown Seattle Association (DSA) has a plan to help improve downtown's Third Avenue as "unprecedented growth" has made the central street struggle with transportation, traffic, and crime, making the area unappealing for pedestrians.</p> <p>Third Avenue, as of 2019, boasts more than 290 buses per peak hour, more than any other transit street in the U.S. or Canada.</p>

“In fact, actual growth trends have shattered expectations as Seattle has added approximately one-third of those estimated new residents in just the past two years,” the report read, written by Kathy O’Kelley and Sabrina Villanueva. “And in 2018, for the third year in a row, Seattle had more cranes than any other city in the nation (65 total). That’s 25 more than second place, Chicago.”

The DSA believes, at its current growth rate, the city will reach its 2035 growth estimate this year, 13 years ahead of schedule, according to DSA’s newest published report.

In 2016, the Seattle City Council adopted a comprehensive plan that estimated Seattle’s 2016 population, 686,800, would grow by 120,000 over the next 20 years.

[Seattle’s current population](#) has already surpassed those expectations and is currently estimated to be 762,500, according to the Office of Planning & Community Development.

The DSA, along with the Downtown Transportation Alliance and partners at the City of Seattle, King County, and Sound Transit, founded Commute Seattle to encourage single commuters to use more efficient transportation.

“Since Commute Seattle was founded in 2005, drive-alone car trips are down, and Seattle leads the nation in transit ridership,” the report read. “In 2017, Seattle logged more new transit trips per capita than any other city (2.5 million total) and grew transit ridership by a rate of 2.3%. Today, even as record numbers of workers come into downtown each day from around the region, only 25% commute alone by car.”

Research shows Third Avenue has relatively little sidewalk space compared to other city streets. Approximately 45% of its right-of-way areas are developed for pedestrians, as of 2019.

“Some people report avoiding Third Avenue altogether due to the lack of personal space and unclear pedestrian pathways,” the report read. “This puts storefront retailers at a clear disadvantage from competitors on adjacent streets.”

Amidst the commuting congestion Third Avenue faces daily, violent crimes have also been on the rise in that area this past year. Mayor Bruce Harrell called the situation along Third Avenue “completely unacceptable,” after a deadly shooting took place in February.

Earlier this year, the Seattle Police Department increased its patrols on Third Avenue in response to the recent violent crimes. Seattle Interim Police Chief Adrian Diaz said in a letter that the department will be launching patrols in the area surrounding 3rd Avenue between Pike and Pine streets.

“I know these last two years have been a difficult time for our city, especially for you, our members of the Seattle Police Department,” Diaz said. “But, at the same time, I believe we have turned a corner and can make a positive impact with the support of Mayor Harrell, City Attorney Davison, and the great majority of the community members we serve.”

Despite the increased volume of crime, the DSA report lists a lack of public or private open spaces, high pedestrian volumes and long bus queues, infrastructure maintenance in disrepair, blank walls or façades that lack engagement, and a high volume of office towers with underutilized lobbies as the street’s biggest concerns.

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HEADLINE	09/08 Ukraine ‘hit squads’ target collaborators
SOURCE	https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/09/08/ukraine-assassinations-occupied-territory-russia/
GIST	KYIV, Ukraine — For anyone contemplating a top administrative position in the Russian-occupied territories in Ukraine, Kyiv authorities have a message: Be afraid. Very afraid.

Since Russian forces invaded in late February and began seizing Ukrainian cities and towns, close to 20 Kremlin-backed officials or their local Ukrainian collaborators have been killed or injured in a wave of assassinations and attempted killings.

They have been gunned down, blown up, hanged and poisoned — an array of methods that reflects the determination of the Ukrainian hit squads and saboteurs often operating deep inside enemy-controlled territory. The unpredictability of the attacks is meant to terrify anyone who might agree to serve in the puppet governments Russia has been creating with an eye toward staging sham referendums and ultimately annexing the occupied lands.

On Tuesday, the bloody roll continued.

Artem Bardin, the military commandant in Berdyansk, a port city on the Sea of Azov that Russia seized early in the war, was critically injured when a car exploded near the city administration building, according to Russia's Tass news agency, which described the incident as a "terrorist act."

Bardin's legs were blown off and he suffered extensive blood loss, but he was alive, Vladimir Rogov, a Ukrainian who works as a pro-Russian official, told Tass. "Doctors continue to fight for his life," Rogov said.

Earlier reports that Bardin had died could not be independently confirmed, but there was no doubt that he would not be returning to his official duties in the occupied city any time soon.

As Ukrainian soldiers press forward in the country's south and east to try to reclaim occupied territories, Ukrainian authorities say the shadowy behind-the-lines operations are undermining, if not outright thwarting, Moscow's plans to take political control, and especially to stage the sham referendums the Kremlin hoped to use to justify annexation.

In addition to the targeted killings, the Ukrainians have carried out attacks on Russian ammunition depots and other crucial military installations and assets in occupied Crimea.

A Ukrainian official, speaking on the condition of anonymity to discuss a sensitive matter, said one of Ukraine's special services was involved in the attempt on Bardin's life, though he couldn't specify which agency.

"In my understanding, everything that is done to destroy the leaders of the invaders and traitors is done by our special services," the official said. "You can say that three organizations are involved in this kind of business: special operations forces, the main intelligence department [of the military] and a special unit of the SBU," Ukraine's main internal security service.

Russian officials have also blamed Ukrainian special services for the car bombing that killed Daria Dugina, a right-wing, nationalist Russian TV commentator and the daughter of far-right Orthodox Christian ideologue Alexander Dugin, a strong supporter of the war. Ukraine has flatly denied involvement in her killing near Moscow.

The assassination campaign, while cheered by many Ukrainians, nonetheless raises legal and ethical questions about extrajudicial killings and potential war crimes, particularly when the targets are political actors or civilians and not combatants on the battlefield or other military personnel. And those questions cannot simply be waved away by pointing to the illegality of Russia's invasion.

The Geneva Conventions, referring to "persons taking no active part in the hostilities," specifically prohibit "violence to life and person, in particular murder of all kinds," as well as "the passing of sentences and the carrying out of executions without previous judgment pronounced by a regularly constituted court."

Mykhailo Podolyak, a top adviser to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, told The Washington Post that the attacks in the occupied territories were evidence of a “powerful partisan and active protest movement” that shows “Moscow is absolutely incapable of controlling” the areas and that “no one here was waiting ... with flowers in their hands” to greet the Russian forces.

As a result, Podolyak said, “all scenarios concocted in the Kremlin, including fictitious referendums, remain only on paper.” He said that Moscow was finding it difficult to recruit from the local population for the pro-Russian administrations, and that Russian officials were refusing to travel to Ukraine because of the risk they would end up on a target list.

“The risks and consequences are extreme — and they understand this very well,” Podolyak said.

During August alone, there were nine such attacks.

In Berdyansk, the deputy head of the traffic police, Aleksandr Kolesnikov, died after a bomb blast, which local authorities blamed on the “Kyiv regime.”

In Kherson, Volodymyr Saldo, the head of the occupation administration, was hospitalized after being poisoned, reportedly by a personal chef. His condition could not be learned. And another Kherson occupation official, Vitaliy Gura, was killed in early August in the city of Nova Kakhovka.

It is far from clear that all these hits were the work of the Ukrainian special services. However, Konrad Muzyka, director of Rochan Consulting, a Polish-based defense consulting firm, said he had not seen “any evidence, even a shred of evidence, or even a rumor” that the attacks were the result of infighting in the pro-Russian administrations.

Muzyka, however, said he did not know if Ukrainian special services were acting alone or with the help of local partisans, but he said the victims were clearly not chosen at random.

“Whoever is organizing the attacks, they try to focus on big fish,” he said.

The operations were aimed in part at derailing the Russian-organized referendums, Muzyka said, which in some areas had tentatively been scheduled to take place this month. Russia staged a similar referendum in Crimea in 2014 before annexing the territory in violation of international law.

“I think it’s fair to say that Kyiv is very concerned about these referendums,” Muzyka said. Ukrainian officials “would do their utmost to actually prevent them from happening.”

In May, Andrei Shevchik, the Russian-appointed head of Enerhodar, the city closest to Ukraine’s giant Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, was targeted in a bombing attack. That strike was confirmed by Dmytro Orlov, the legitimate mayor, who was unseated by the invading Russians and is exiled from his city.

Now, the attacks on pro-Kremlin officials are taking place as Ukrainian forces conduct what appears to be a major offensive to drive Russian forces from Kherson.

On Monday, Kirill Stremousov, a senior official in the Moscow-backed Kherson administration, said that “a pause has been taken” in carrying out the referendum in his region because of the security situation. Other Russia-aligned officials tried to walk back that statement, but it was far from clear that Russian forces would control the territory long enough to stage the fake vote.

At the end of August, Podolyak tweeted a still photo taken from Quentin Tarantino’s film “Inglourious Basterds,” which recounts the exploits of a fictitious U.S. unit killing German soldiers behind enemy lines in World War II.

“In Kherson, it is said that Russian officers ... have been avoiding evening walks recently,” he wrote. “As soon as city falls asleep, the partisans wake up. ... We wish all the collaborators a ‘good night.’”

HEADLINE	09/08 US signals in it for long haul in Ukraine
SOURCE	https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2022/sep/8/new-aid-package-latest-sign-us-it-long-haul-ukrain/
GIST	<p>The Biden administration on Thursday announced a fresh \$675 million military aid package for Ukraine and pledged to make available another \$1 billion in American-made weapons as officials sent the strongest signal yet that Washington is broadening its focus beyond the battle with Russia and aiming to bolster the Ukrainian army for the long term.</p> <p>The latest package — first revealed by Secretary of State Antony Blinken after a surprise visit with Ukrainian government leaders in Kyiv — includes a host of weapons, ammunition and equipment that U.S. officials say will prove crucial as the Ukrainian military unleashes a major counteroffensive against Russian occupying forces in the country's south and east.</p> <p>The aid includes include ammunition for High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems, or HIMARS; four 105 mm Howitzers and 36,000 105 mm artillery rounds; high-speed anti-radiation missiles; more than 5,000 anti-armor systems; 50 armored medical treatment vehicles; and a host of other military arms and equipment. Along with other American gear such as the Javelin anti-tank missiles, which have proved highly effective in neutralizing Russia's armored force advantage, the package will replenish the Ukrainian armed forces at a critical moment in the fight.</p> <p>U.S. officials made clear that they are looking far beyond Ukraine's current counteroffensive and are aiming to reshape the balance of power in the region for years to come. The chief goal, they said, is to dissuade any future Russian aggression against Ukraine or any other nation in the theater, including NATO states bordering Russia that are thought to be at the greatest risk of attack.</p> <p>"We won't let up in our support for Ukraine's self-defense. Not today, not tomorrow," Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said during a press conference at Ramstein Air Base in Germany. That press conference was held after the fifth meeting of the Ukraine Defense Contact Group, a multinational Western coalition that aims to coordinate and streamline military assistance to Kyiv.</p> <p>"We're working together to arm and to train Ukraine on the current fight, yet we're also working together to help Ukraine develop capable, sustainable forces to defend itself and deter aggression over the long term," Mr. Austin said. "Ukraine is fighting for its life.</p> <p>"Ukraine is fighting for its sovereign territory and its democracy and its freedom. But the stakes reach far beyond the front lines. They reach us all."</p> <p>In addition to the \$675 million announced Thursday, the administration is opening up another \$1 billion in long-term military financing to Ukraine, which will give Kyiv access to American-made weapons and equipment. Another \$1.2 billion in military financing will be made available to 18 of Ukraine's neighbors, including NATO members at the greatest potential risk of attack from Russia, officials said.</p> <p>Since Russia launched its invasion on Feb. 24, the U.S. has given more than \$14 billion in direct military assistance to Ukraine.</p> <p>In Moscow, Russian officials blasted the latest round of aid and cast it as a plot to enrich Western defense companies.</p> <p>"This is part of a global corruption scheme to allocate colossal funds from the budgets of Western so-called democracies and divide them among their companies," Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova told reporters. "We have seen this many times in other countries and other regions of the world. Now, this scheme is being implemented in Ukraine."</p> <p>Battlefield impact</p>

U.S. aid, particularly the HIMARS and other artillery assets, have had a measurable impact on the unfolding battles in eastern and southern Ukraine, said Gen. Mark A. Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

“We are seeing real and measurable gains in the use of these systems,” he said at the Ramstein press conference alongside Mr. Austin, stressing that the Ukrainian military’s ability to operate these systems effectively is improving rapidly.

“It is having a direct impact on the Russian ability to project and sustain combat power,” Gen. Milley said.

Beyond the impact on current battles, it’s clear there has been a subtle shift in the administration’s approach over the past several months. Pushing back the Russian invasion remains the primary goal, but the U.S. and its allies also see an opportunity to help transform the Ukrainian military into a force powerful enough that the Kremlin may never again consider military action against its smaller neighbor.

A key example of the long-term plan in action is a Pentagon contract awarded to leading defense firm Raytheon late last month for \$182 million worth of National Advanced Surface-to-Air Missile Systems, or NASAMS, for the Ukrainian military. Those systems have a delivery date of August 2024, meaning the Defense Department has put pen to paper for a years-long, multipronged effort to greatly enhance Ukraine’s lethal and defensive capabilities.

Foreign policy analysts say such moves are crucial. Now is the time, they say, to double down on long-term support for Ukraine.

“The United States’ goal is a democratic, sovereign, independent, prosperous Ukraine with the means to defend itself and deter another attack by Russia. That means enabling Ukraine to defeat the current invasion in the immediate term and arm them sufficiently over the longer term to make another invasion impossible,” said William Taylor, former U.S. ambassador to Ukraine and now the vice president, Russia and Europe, at the U.S. Institute of Peace.

Mr. Taylor said the U.S. should look to its military dealings with Israel as a blueprint for the long-term strategy in Ukraine. The military-to-military relationship can evolve, he said, into a more concrete partnership that stands the test of time.

“The U.S.-Israel military arrangement gives a model of how we can provide Ukraine the military equipment they need to defend themselves,” Mr. Taylor told The Washington Times. “Every 10 years, the U.S. and Israeli governments together agree on the weapons Israel will need over the medium term. ... This enables Israel to make longer-term decisions on weapons systems designed to give them the capabilities they need. The United States has already given Ukraine more than \$10 billion in military equipment in six months. So, we can do this — we are doing this.”

The arrangement, he added, “would allow Ukrainian military planners to work closely with their American counterparts to agree on what they need now and what they will need over time, updated regularly.”

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HEADLINE	09/08 LA Co. homeless population over 69,000
SOURCE	https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2022/sep/08/los-angeles-homelessness-unhoused-people-number
GIST	<p>Los Angeles has experienced a 4% increase in its homeless population during the pandemic, with 69,144 unhoused people counted across the county this year, according to government data released on Thursday.</p> <p>The Los Angeles homeless services authority (Lahsa), which conducted the count in February 2022 after skipping a year during the pandemic, said the growth of the unhoused population had slowed in the last two years, in part due to pandemic programs and funding. The previous count, conducted in January 2020, showed a 13% jump from 2019.</p>

The new figures are a rough estimate from a single day and are believed to be an undercount. While the count suggests some progress compared to previous spikes, 70% of the county's unhoused population are still living outside, with 48,548 people considered unsheltered – rates that are significantly higher than other US cities with homelessness crises.

The humanitarian disaster in the largest county in the US has pushed unhoused people to live outside in tents, encampments, cars, RVs and makeshift structures, scattered under freeways and bridges, in [major city parks](#) and [beach communities](#), on streets and sidewalks, and in [remote desert terrain](#). An [average](#) of five unhoused people now [die every day in LA county](#), some due to extreme summer heat or hypothermia in the winter.

While cities across the US are grappling with worsening housing crises and inequality, LA and California have faced particularly intense scrutiny over a problem that seems intractable despite the state having the fifth-largest economy in the world, a budget surplus and some of the nation's wealthiest neighborhoods.

In the city of LA, officials counted 41,980 unhoused people, marking a 1.7% increase from the 2020 count and a slower increase from previous years. Within the city's homeless population, 68%, or 28,458 people, were considered unsheltered.

At a press briefing, Lahsa leaders acknowledged residents may not feel as if homelessness is rising at a rate slower than pre-pandemic years and said that was probably due in part to a substantial jump in visible signs of homelessness. Officials estimated that there had been 17% increase in people living in tents, vehicles and makeshift shelters during the pandemic.

There continues to be severe racial disparities in the crisis, with Black residents making up 30% of unhoused Angelenos, while accounting for only 9% of the broader population. There has also been a substantial increase in unhoused Latino residents, who now make up 44% of the unhoused population. Latinos make up 49% of LA county residents.

Officials said nearly 40% of unhoused people were experiencing substance abuse disorders and/or serious mental illness, meaning the majority of people experiencing homelessness suffer from neither. Still, Lahsa said that overdoses among LA's unhoused population had increased by 80%.

Lahsa leaders emphasized that the root cause of the crisis was a lack of affordable housing and suggested the region needed to add 800,000 units over the next eight years to stem the crisis.

The new figures come as LA moves to [end its Covid-era protections against evictions](#) and rent increases by the end of the year, paving the way for more displacement. Even with restrictions in place, [thousands of renters](#) have been evicted during the pandemic.

“One-time federal pandemic assistance and policies helped keep people in their homes and expanded shelters,” said Kristina Dixon, co-executive director of Lahsa, hinting at a potentially worsening crisis. “However, many of the policies and funding sources that made an impact are now ending, leaving households unsure if they will be able to keep their homes and less resources for the housing system to respond.”

The region's systems could house every currently unhoused person in LA county within the next three to four years, “but the number of people falling into homelessness outpaces our ability to house them”, added Molly Rysman, co-executive director.

Dixon also cautioned that homelessness was a “lagging indicator” and that future counts could potentially show “significant increases”. Dixon further noted that the count had been conducted during the Omicron Covid surge, which presented challenges to the process and particularly made it harder to count unhoused youth and families, as programs were closed. The count found that the number of unhoused senior citizens increased by 6.5%, suggesting a worsening catastrophe for the ageing population in the region.

	<p>Local and state officials have poured an unprecedented amount of money into efforts to combat homelessness in recent years, but the new data suggests it hasn't been enough.</p> <p>LA city leaders, facing pressure from voters, have responded by passing an anti-camping measure banning people from sleeping outside within certain boundaries. Critics say the crackdown and sweeps have punished people who have nowhere else to go, shuffling the unhoused around without providing permanent housing.</p> <p>LA county is also winding down its pandemic program called Project Roomkey, which provided temporary motel rooms for unhoused people in an effort to get them off the street and out of group shelters. The program aimed to transition people into housing, but advocates have warned that some people are forced to wait months or years for placements, and that when Roomkey sites shutter, some end up back on the street or in different temporary programs.</p> <p>In April, when Heidi Marston stepped down as the head of Lahsa, she called the crisis a “monster of our own making” and argued that local leaders were too focused on “quick fixes” to remove unhoused people from sight instead of addressing the root causes of the problem, including the extremely high cost of living in the region.</p>
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HEADLINE	09/09 Tajikistan detains, deports Afghan refugees
SOURCE	https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2022/sep/09/tajikistan-rounding-up-and-deporting-afghan-refugees
GIST	<p>The Tajikistan authorities are reportedly rounding up Afghan refugees and forcing them to cross the border back into Afghanistan, despite some having been granted asylum in other countries.</p> <p>According to reports from Tajikistan's 10,000-strong Afghan refugee community, people are being picked up off the street and houses raided in a spate of recent round-ups of Afghan families, who have been sheltering in the country since the Taliban seized power in August 2021.</p> <p>The UN's refugee agency, UNHCR, has appealed to the Tajikistan authorities to stop the forced deportations. It is not clear what the motivation or policy is behind them; until a few weeks ago the Tajikistan government was cooperating with the UNHCR to shelter and resettle Afghans fleeing the Taliban authorities.</p> <p>“We are asking Tajikistan to stop detaining and deporting refugees, an action that clearly puts lives at risk,” said Elizabeth Tan, UNHCR's director of international protection.</p> <p>“Forced return of refugees is against the law and runs contrary to the principle of non-refoulement, a cornerstone of international refugee law,” she said, referring to the legal tenet that forbids a country receiving asylum seekers from returning them to somewhere they would be at risk of persecution.</p> <p>While there are no available figures on the number of recent deportations from Tajikistan, the UN documented a case of five Afghans forced back on 23 August. They included “a family comprising three children and their mother, [and] were returned to Afghanistan through the Panji Poyon border checkpoint in southern Tajikistan, despite UNHCR's interventions to halt the deportations”, the UN agency stated.</p> <p>Afghans in Tajikistan who spoke to the Guardian say that the numbers being forced back over the land border into Afghanistan is running into the hundreds, with forced deportations increasing over the past fortnight. They said that many Afghan refugees were being sent back without passports or identity documents and left to fend for themselves, with no way of getting to a place of safety.</p> <p>For nearly a week, no one in Samira's family has dared to step out of their flat in a small town in northern Tajikistan. Her children have not been to school and they have not felt safe enough to get groceries or medical supplies.</p>

All around them, they say, other members of the Afghan refugee community are being detained and forcibly deported back to their home country without clear reason or justification.

“We are living with a lot of fear that we might be detained by the police and deported at any minute,” said Samira*, a former security official who escaped Afghanistan after repeated attempts on her life.

“We will be arrested by the Taliban the moment we enter Afghanistan. I spent years fighting them, they will seek their revenge.”

“Even those with proper documents and ongoing asylum cases in western countries are being picked from the streets and dropped off at the border between Afghanistan and Tajikistan ... which is why we stopped going outside,” said Ejaz*, Samira’s husband.

“With one of the families we know, the husband was deported without even being allowed to appeal against the decision or see his wife and kids. The family had a flight scheduled for 12 September to Canada, where they were emigrating. But now the husband is back in Afghanistan, while the wife and two kids are struggling to survive here.”

Maryam, a former Afghan media personality who fled to Turkey to escape the Taliban, is frantic with worry for the rest of her family, who are refugees in Tajikistan. They have locked themselves inside their home and are living in terror.

“They told me that it started with Afghans being rounded up from the streets, so they stopped leaving their homes. But then they [authorities] started raiding homes and picked up people from their places of work,” she said. “I am afraid to talk to them on the phone or to check in with friends. Everyone is afraid they will be tracked and deported.”

While Samira and her family are also in the final stages of emigrating to Canada, she is racked with dread over the deportations. Her concern is mainly for her children, who have already experienced immense trauma. “The refugee life has been hard on children. They deserved a better future,” she said.

The Tajikistan authorities have been contacted for comment.

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HEADLINE	09/08 Ukraine counterattacks surprise Russia
SOURCE	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/sep/08/ukraine-russia-war-military-success-kyiv-counterattack-strategy
GIST	<p>A sudden, unexpected Ukrainian military success south-east of Kharkiv changes the analysis of Kyiv’s counterattack strategy. What had been expected to be a well-telegraphed effort to isolate the city of Kherson in the south has been turned on its head by the sudden pushback against Russian forces at the northern edge of the front.</p> <p>The effort started on Tuesday, and by Wednesday the US Institute for the Study of War estimated that Ukraine’s forces had, in a surprise attack, advanced “at least 20km into Russian-held territory” recapturing approximately 400 sq km (154 sq miles) in an area scarcely focused on by military analysts until now.</p> <p>According to one Russian military blogger, as highlighted by Rob Lee, a former US marine and military analyst, Ukrainian forces massed a “powerful tank fist” with 15 tanks to break through the occupiers lines. Cleverly, Kyiv had brought up its air defences in support, preventing Russian jets from immediately striking back to eradicate the gains, a sign of more sophisticated battlefield tactics.</p> <p>The fighting is concentrated around the village of Balakliia, roughly 45 miles south-east of Kharkiv – which appears to still be held by the Russians, but which Ukraine hopes to surround – and in the</p>

vicinity of Shevchenkovo on the way to the Russian staging post of Kupiansk. The military aim is to increase pressure on Izium, a strategic city captured by the invaders at the end of April, a gateway to the western Donbas.

What will happen in the ensuing days is, as ever, hard to predict. But the assumption is that Ukraine has taken advantage of redeployments by Russia away from the north and east of the vast frontline to launch its surprise attack, making clear that it is willing to be flexible and opportunistic – and that anybody who is sure of Kyiv’s strategy should instead be willing to be surprised.

Contrast this to the Russian approach. Kremlin-directed forces are not used to thinking flexibly. When they have announced an offensive, as happened in spring, Moscow stuck to it, and for several months made slow but real gains in the eastern Donbas using the simple and grimly effective tactic of concentrating its artillery on a succession of cities, now Bakhmut.

In the past few weeks, though, the initiative has passed from Russia to Ukraine – a point clearly demonstrated by this week’s events south-east of Kharkiv. The medium-term strategic prize for Ukraine remains recapturing Kherson, because of its exposed position across the Dnieper River and because Russian-held bridges and river crossings resupplying the city appear easy to target.

Nevertheless, the progress near Kharkiv is significant, although it remains unclear if Ukraine can keep it up as autumn begins. Attackers usually sustain greater casualties. A Swedish volunteer in Ukraine described, in an Instagram posting, that only three soldiers from his platoon of 22 remain, with four killed in “one single shot” earlier this week from a tank grenade aimed at their bunker.

On the other hand, Ukrainian morale appears higher than for Russian counterparts as the war drags on into its seventh month. The country’s leaders are briefing allies they believe there is a short window up into November where their forces can show that they could push the Russians back – and do so much further again in a well-planned offensive in the spring.

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HEADLINE	09/08 Russian bloggers slam military failures
SOURCE	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/sep/08/we-have-already-lost-far-right-russian-bloggers-slam-kremlin-over-army-response
GIST	<p>“The war in Ukraine will continue until the complete defeat of Russia,” Igor Girkin, a far-right nationalist, grumbled in a video address to his 430,000 followers on Telegram on Monday. “We have already lost, the rest is just a matter of time.”</p> <p>Girkin, a former Russian intelligence colonel who became a commander of the pro-Russian separatist forces in 2014, is arguably the most prominent voice within an increasingly loud and angry group of ultra-nationalist and pro-war bloggers who have taken to berating the Kremlin for its failure to achieve its tactical objectives as the fighting in Ukraine has entered its seventh month.</p> <p>After Ukraine’s latest counter-offensive in the south and the north-east of the country, these bloggers – who have so far been granted a public platform denied to many – have intensified their criticism of the Kremlin, slamming the army’s inadequate performance in the war and urging Vladimir Putin to declare a full-scale mobilisation.</p> <p>“They are certainly getting angrier, and with good and obvious reason, especially as the gap between the official line and the reality on the ground widens,” said Mark Galeotti, an expert in Russian security affairs.</p> <p>On Wednesday, Ukraine launched a surprise counterattack near the country’s second biggest city of Kharkiv, encircling Balakliia, a strategically important town of 27,000 people, and recapturing several smaller settlements.</p>

The military bloggers, who are often former veterans with contacts on the frontlines, also provide a rare insight into Russia's real performance on the ground. "Some are very dubious sources but there are also those – like Girkin – who know what they're talking about and clearly are in touch with people at the front or who otherwise are in the know," said Galeotti.

The Russian government has not published its own losses since 25 March, when it gave a total of 1,351 killed and 3,825 wounded. Western intelligence [believes](#) as many as 80,000 Russian soldiers have been killed or wounded since the start of the war.

Instead, since the onset of the war, the Russian defence ministry has repeatedly issued improbable statements about its successes on the battlefield, boasting of having [destroyed](#) more than 40 western-made Himars rocket launchers and claiming to have decimated the [Ukrainian air force](#).

State television, the most popular source of information in Russia, similarly continues to paint a rosy picture of Russian successes in Ukraine. In a combative speech on Wednesday, Putin [reiterated](#) that Russia had "lost nothing" in a war he said was going according to plan.

However, that optimism was not shared by others as Ukraine encircled Balakliia on Wednesday, pulling off what has already been labelled as one of the war's most impressive strategic moves and hailed as "good news" by Ukraine's president, Volodymyr Zelenskiy, on Wednesday night.

"It must be stated that in Balakliia, the armed forces of Ukraine have completely outplayed our command," Starshe Eddy, a popular pro-war Russian blogger, wrote on his Telegram channel.

Starshe Eddy's audience on Telegram, like those of other war bloggers, has ballooned since the start of the invasion, from about 28,000 in January to 500,000, according to Tgstat, an analytics service for Telegram channels.

Pointing to Russia's non-reaction to the Ukrainian offensive, Aleksandr Kots, a pro-Kremlin war journalist, accused the authorities on Wednesday of hiding "bad news" about the situation on the ground. "We need to start doing something about the system where our leadership doesn't like to talk about bad news, and their subordinates don't want to upset their bosses," he said.

Ukraine's latest offensive has also led to renewed calls from the far-right nationalist for a general mobilisation, a move Putin has so far opted against despite growing signs the Russian army is facing an acute lack of new soldiers.

"Mobilisation is, let's put it bluntly, our only chance to avoid a crushing defeat," wrote Andrei Morozov, another popular blogger.

For now, the Kremlin seems to be willing to accept the criticism coming its way from the band of pro-war bloggers. Girkin has repeatedly called for the firing of the defence minister and close Putin ally, Sergei Shoigu, urging in one post for the minister to be executed by firing squad.

The Kremlin's tolerance of the bloggers' comments is remarkable, experts say, given the newly introduced laws under which criticism of the war can be punished with up to 15 years in jail.

Pavel Luzhin, an independent Russian military expert, believes the bloggers are left "untouched" because they provide an outlet for a section of the Russian population to vent their anger about the failures in Ukraine. "The Kremlin is too scared to simply ignore the nationalist section of the population," Luzhin said, adding that some of the bloggers were probably operating with the tacit approval of the security services.

Galeotti similarly said "many" of the bloggers were "connected to or protected by figures within the military or security agencies".

	<p>For now, Girkin and other military bloggers are likely to keep up their daily criticism as Putin's bloody military offensive has stalled in Ukraine. "Don't EXPECT ANY BIG WINS in the next 2–3 months," he wrote in a post this week. "If our Kremlin elders do not change their tactics, we will be seeing catastrophic defeats by then."</p> <p>Girkin declined to comment for this article, saying he considered the western media "his enemy".</p>
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HEADLINE	09/09 Day 198 of the Russia invasion
SOURCE	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/sep/09/russia-ukraine-war-latest-what-we-know-on-day-198-of-the-invasion
GIST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The US secretary of state, Antony Blinken, has told Volodymyr Zelenskiy the war with Russia is in a "pivotal moment" as Ukraine's military continues its counteroffensive in the south of the country. The Associated Press reported that Blinken told the Ukrainian president: "We know this is a pivotal moment, more than six months into Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, as your counteroffensive is now under way and proving effective." • Blinken's surprise trip to Kyiv came after the US unveiled nearly \$2.7bn (£2.4bn) in new military support to Ukraine and other European countries threatened by Russia. Blinken travelled in secret on his second trip to Kyiv since the Russian invasion began in February. He approved \$2bn in foreign military financing under a programme in which the US offers loans or grants to other nations to buy US-produced weapons. That amount is in addition to another \$675m in military assistance announced by the defence secretary, Lloyd Austin, and includes more arms, ammunition and supplies for precision-guided HIMARS rockets. • Poland and the Baltic states have announced they will temporarily restrict access for Russian citizens holding European Union visas. The prime ministers of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland said in a statement that the move had been taken to address "public policy and security threats" arising from the "substantial and growing influx of Russian citizens" into the EU. The measures were expected to come into force by 19 September and would "restrict the entry into the Schengen area for Russian citizens travelling for tourism, culture, sport and business purposes". • Volodymyr Zelenskiy said Kyiv's forces had "liberated dozens of settlements" and reclaimed 1,000 sq km (385 sq miles) of territory in the east and south since 1 September in the counteroffensive. The Ukrainian president also posted a video in which Ukrainian soldiers claimed to have captured the eastern town of Balakliia near Ukraine's second city of Kharkiv, Reuters reported. • Heavy fighting was reported on Thursday in areas near the Russian-held Zaporizhzhia nuclear power station in the south, after Ukraine warned it might have to shut down the plant to avoid disaster, Reuters reported. • Volodymyr Zelenskiy paid tribute to Queen Elizabeth, who has died at the age of 96. The Ukrainian president said on Twitter: "It is with deep sadness that we learned of the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. On behalf of the people, we extend sincere condolences to the @RoyalFamily, the entire United Kingdom and the Commonwealth over this irreparable loss." • Russia's president, Vladimir Putin, extended his condolences to King Charles for the "irreparable loss" of his mother, saying the Queen had "rightfully enjoyed the love and respect of her subjects, as well as authority on the world stage". • Norway said it would donate about 160 Hellfire missiles to Ukraine as well as launching pads, guidance units and night-vision equipment. • Two people have been killed and four injured by Russian shelling in the Donetsk region amid "massive shelling" in Bakhmut city, the Ukraine prosecutor general's office said. In Kharkiv's industrial district, authorities said two people had been killed and five injured in Russian shelling. • The UK's Ministry of Defence said Ukraine appeared to be "imposing pressure on Russian forces" in Kherson and had probably destroyed a bridge that served as "one of the main routes between the northern and southern sectors of Russia's military presence along the Dnieper River".

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ukraine’s top military chief has claimed responsibility for an attack on Russia’s Saky airbase in Crimea last month – the first official acknowledgment from Kyiv that it was behind the strike, which destroyed at least nine Russian aircraft. • The UK’s permanent representative to the UN, Dame Barbara Woodward, has said the deportation of people from Ukraine has “chilling echoes from European history” and that the “appalling term ‘denazification’” was a “cover for obliterating Ukraine from the map”. • Belarus has started week-long military exercises near the Polish border, its capital of Minsk and the north-eastern region of Vitebsk, the country’s defence ministry said.
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HEADLINE	09/08 ECB raises rates; Europe faces recession
SOURCE	https://www.wsj.com/articles/ecb-raises-interest-rates-by-a-historic-0-75-point-as-europe-stares-at-recession-11662639573?mod=hp_lead_pos3
GIST	<p>FRANKFURT—The European Central Bank raised interest rates by the largest amount since the early days of Europe’s currency union, moving aggressively to combat record inflation even as an energy crisis puts Europe on the brink of recession.</p> <p>The bank said in a statement that it would increase its key rate to 0.75% from zero—its second hike this year following a 50-basis-point rise in July—and signaled that further rises were likely over the coming months.</p> <p>At a news conference, ECB President Christine Lagarde warned that inflation was spreading beyond energy to a range of products. She said the ECB was ready to increase rates aggressively over the next several meetings.</p> <p>“We want all economic actors to understand that the ECB is serious” about countering high inflation, Ms. Lagarde said.</p> <p>The euro slid to about 99.7 cents against the dollar after the ECB’s decision, and investors dumped European government bonds while Ms. Lagarde was speaking as they moved to price in more interest-rate increases in the months ahead.</p> <p>Thursday’s unusually large increase mirrors recent moves by other major central banks, including the Federal Reserve, which is expected to unveil a third successive 0.75-point rate rise later this month. Canada’s central bank raised its policy rate on Wednesday by 0.75 percentage point to 3.25%, a 14-year high.</p> <p>The ECB is in a tougher position than its North American counterparts because Europe’s economy is being hit harder by the war in Ukraine. Inflation in the 19-nation eurozone has surpassed U.S. levels in recent weeks as Russia’s throttling of energy supplies to Europe has driven up prices.</p> <p>Rising borrowing costs will likely increase the risk of a slide into recession for Europe, whose households and businesses are wrestling with surging costs and sagging confidence. With governments piling on debt to shield consumers and businesses from the economic fallout, a national election in Italy later this month could exacerbate strains in the region’s bond markets.</p> <p>Germany’s 10-year government-bond yield rose to 1.74% on Thursday, nearing its highest level since 2014. Italy’s benchmark borrowing costs, which have been highly sensitive to ECB policy, rose above 4%. Yields rise as prices fall.</p> <p>“I thought the language they used around inflation was really quite hawkish,” said Simon Bell, a portfolio manager at Legal & General Investment Management.</p> <p>Still, Mr. Bell doesn’t expect 75-basis-point rate increases to become the norm for the ECB as policy makers likely remain concerned about the stability of financially fragile eurozone members like Italy.</p>

The difference between 10-year bond yields for Germany and Italy—a key barometer of eurozone financial-market stress—stood at 2.3 percentage points on Thursday. That is just below levels reached in June that spurred emergency action from the central bank to shore up support for Italian debt.

Eurozone inflation increased to 9.1% in August and is expected to rise toward 10% over the coming months, as some government energy and public-transport subsidies expire, especially in Germany.

Despite that, the ECB's policy rate is significantly below those of other major central banks, including the Fed, which is expected to increase its benchmark rate later this month to a range between 3% and 3.25%.

The ECB has moved more cautiously because the eurozone's economic recovery during the Covid-19 pandemic has been relatively slow, and officials initially expected inflation to decline this year. They also worry about [how higher borrowing costs would affect weaker economies](#) in Southern Europe.

"Better late than never," said Clemens Fuest, president of the Munich-based Ifo think tank, of the ECB's policy decision. He warned that delaying interest-rate hikes because of an expected economic downturn would only push up the cost of bring down inflation in future.

Ms. Lagarde said the ECB wasn't yet ready to start reducing its multitrillion-dollar holdings of government debt, which the Fed has been doing since June. The ECB amassed those bonds during a yearslong effort to combat ultralow inflation.

Comparing the ECB's policies with those of the Fed, Ms. Lagarde underlined the more robust state of the U.S. economy. "When you look at the labor market...we see a U.S. market which is...red hot," she said.

While unemployment is also historically low in Europe, economists see few signs that the eurozone economy is overheating. Instead, eurozone inflation is being driven primarily by soaring energy prices and persistent supply bottlenecks, which the ECB can do little to solve.

The region's gas bill this year and next is expected to be around 4% of gross domestic product above its historical average, according to Natixis, a French bank. Since energy is largely imported, that makes the region poorer and deals an enormous blow to the purchasing power of households and businesses.

Ultimately, energy and food prices, and government interventions to shield energy users from some of the pain, will have a much bigger impact on inflation and the depth of the looming recession than the ECB's policies, said Holger Schmieding, chief economist at Berenberg Bank in London.

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HEADLINE	09/08 Russian oligarch offers Ukraine \$1B
SOURCE	https://www.wsj.com/articles/russian-billionaire-mikhail-fridman-offers-1-billion-to-ukraine-in-hope-of-sanctions-relief-11662659071?mod=hp_lead_pos7
GIST	<p>Russian businessman Mikhail Fridman is offering to transfer \$1 billion of his personal wealth into a Ukrainian bank he co-founded, a proposal that people familiar with the issue said is intended to persuade the U.K. to lift sanctions against him.</p> <p>Mr. Fridman's proposal is among a number of overtures that blacklisted business executives, banks and companies are quietly making to Western authorities as those nations prosecute a campaign to economically cripple Russia in response to its war in Ukraine, according to U.S. officials.</p> <p>Mr. Fridman denied having made a quid pro quo offer to Ukraine.</p> <p>"The U.K. does not condone any sanctions avoidance," the British Foreign Office said.</p>

In March, in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Western allies [sanctioned Russian oligarchs and political allies](#) of Russian President [Vladimir Putin](#). Among those targeted by the European Union and the U.K. were Mr. Fridman, who owns controlling shares in Alfa Bank, and his business partners Petr Aven and German Khan.

Mr. Aven and Mr. Khan declined to comment.

While none of the men have been sanctioned by the U.S., and they insist they have no influence on the government in Moscow or its execution of the war in Ukraine, Alfa Bank, one of Russia's largest private financial institutions, is blacklisted by the U.S. Treasury Department.

The war in Ukraine has upset the balance that Mr. Fridman, who was born in Soviet-era Ukraine, has for decades skillfully maintained between his Western and Russian business interests.

Since March, Mr. Fridman's assets have been frozen in the U.K. Companies and investors have been severing ties with him to avoid being sanctioned themselves.

Alfa Bank-Ukraine has proposed to officials in Kyiv that Mr. Fridman be permitted to transfer \$1 billion of his personal wealth into the bank, said Roman Shpek, the financial institution's supervisory board chairman. That money would be used to finance critical projects in Ukraine related to infrastructure, healthcare, and food and energy security, he said.

"The bank would like, as one of the biggest private banks in Ukraine, systemic banks, to be an active player in recovering the Ukrainian economy after the war," said Mr. Shpek, a former Ukrainian economy minister.

Mr. Shpek said Alfa-Bank Ukraine sent its proposal to the National Bank of Ukraine in June. A spokeswoman for the National Bank of Ukraine, which oversees the financial sector and would have to approve such a transfer, didn't reply to a request for comment.

Mr. Shpek denied that the proposed transfer was intended to secure sanctions relief.

"For us, it's a really important economic project, and we would like to avoid any speculation that Fridman and his partners would like to invest \$1 billion to Ukraine to receive something in another country," Mr. Shpek said. "I don't see this as some speculation or game that in the future can help to avoid or lift sanctions. It's a completely different issue."

Mr. Fridman would need a special dispensation from the EU to access and transfer money from his accounts there to Ukraine. Last week, Alfa-Bank Ukraine petitioned the Council of Europe on his behalf, Mr. Shpek said.

A spokeswoman for the Council of Europe didn't reply to a request for comment.

Dozens of sanctioned Russians are contemplating similar moves to free themselves from financial straits, according to the people familiar with these discussions. Ukrainian officials have considered creating a fund into which sanctioned Russians could deposit money, according to the people familiar with these discussions in Kyiv. That money would then be used to benefit Ukraine, though it is unclear whether it might lead directly to sanctions relief.

Rostyslav Shurma, the deputy head of the Ukrainian presidential administration, said that the government in Kyiv would address the Fridman proposal only as part of a broader framework that might include the fund being considered to help Ukraine. "This should be the general approach to all the sanctioned Russians," Mr. Shurma said.

Sanctioned business executives and companies are also reaching out to the U.S., U.K. and other Western authorities as they explore how to ease sanctions, preserve their wealth and free frozen assets.

“There are a lot of parties petitioning both the U.S. Treasury and State Departments to be removed from the lists,” said Erich Ferrari, an attorney who has previously represented several high-profile sanction targets.

While the Treasury Department oversees most U.S.-imposed sanctions, the State Department is reviewing delisting petitions, Mr. Ferrari said. The proposals include business executives and firms severing relationships with the primary targets of Western sanctions, divesting ownership and stepping off the governing boards of sanctioned firms, he said.

A State spokesman said the department wouldn’t comment on diplomatic negotiations.

“The United States government has been very clear in public and private communications that sanctions will target Russian and Kremlin elites, oligarchs, and Russia’s political and national security leaders who have supported Russian President Vladimir Putin’s brutal and illegal invasion of Ukraine,” the spokesman said.

A spokeswoman with the Treasury Department declined to comment.

Playing the role of a peacemaker in the war has already benefited one other Russian oligarch, billionaire Roman Abramovich. [Mr. Abramovich wasn’t targeted by the U.S.](#) government after an appeal by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, though he has been subject to British sanctions. Mr. Abramovich has been acting as [an intermediary between Ukraine and Russia](#) on a number of issues, including prisoner exchanges, the Journal has previously reported.

The U.S. hasn’t sanctioned Mr. Fridman, but the Treasury Department has imposed one of its most powerful penalties by prohibiting transactions and any other business dealings with Alfa Bank.

Transfer of any of Mr. Fridman’s assets in Alfa Bank or any other interests in sanctioned companies would require Treasury approval. In other cases, the U.S. has been reluctant to grant approval without significant concessions and oversight to ensure that the purpose of the sanctions—depriving Mr. Putin and his allies of funds and power—is still being served.

While turning prominent Russians to its cause could bring public-relations benefits, Ukraine would likely face a domestic backlash if it provided political cover to prominent figures who might be able to influence the Kremlin.

“We cannot have any deal with Russians,” said Mariana Bezuhla, the deputy chair of the Ukrainian parliament’s Committee on National Security, Defense, and Intelligence. Ms. Bezuhla said that Ukraine should work only with Russians who provide military intelligence.

Mr. Shurma said that Ukraine would consider any such deal for sanctions relief only after the war has ended.

“The target of the sanctions is not to get some money from some wealthy Russians,” he said. “The target of the sanctions is to create decent pressure on the elites to stop the war.”

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HEADLINE	09/09 UK prepares new era after Queen’s death
SOURCE	https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/09/09/world/queen-elizabeth
GIST	LONDON — King Charles III, newly acceded to the British throne, will return to London on Friday from Balmoral Castle in Scotland, a day after the death of his mother, Queen Elizabeth II, to deliver an inaugural address to the nation.

The televised speech, expected in the late afternoon, will be the centerpiece of a solemn day of remembrance for the queen. But it will also emphasize the continuity of governance in Britain's constitutional monarchy, as the new king will hold an audience with the prime minister, Liz Truss, who took office [earlier this week](#).

Before the king arrives in the capital, the sound of gun salutes will reverberate through the city from Hyde Park and other sites — 96 rounds, one for each year of the queen's life. Bells will toll at Westminster Abbey, St. Paul's Cathedral and Windsor Castle, outside London, where the queen spent much of the end of her life.

Charles will be accompanied by Camilla, now the queen consort, a title her mother-in-law fervently wished her to have. Marking her 70 years on the throne in February, the queen anticipated this moment of transition, appealing in a personal statement for Britons to open their hearts to Charles and Camilla.

"When, in the fullness of time, my son Charles becomes King, I know you will give him and his wife Camilla the same support that you have given me," the queen wrote. "It is my sincere wish that, when that time comes, Camilla will be known as Queen Consort as she continues her own loyal service."

That settled a delicate question about how the former Camilla Parker-Bowles would be known when Charles acceded to the throne. The two were romantically involved when Charles was married to Diana, Princess of Wales. He and Diana later divorced, and he married Camilla. Charles had long pushed for Camilla to be recognized as queen consort once he was king.

In a week of dizzying change in Britain, Charles is the second senior British figure to deliver a maiden address. Ms. Truss spoke on Tuesday in front of Downing Street, on the day the queen anointed her as prime minister. Two days later, she walked out to the same lectern to swear fealty to the new king.

The king's speech is the first of a choreographed sequence of events marking the transition from Elizabeth to Charles. On Saturday, Charles will be formally proclaimed after a meeting of the Accession Council, a conclave of senior officials who meet, by custom, at St. James's Palace in the wake of a monarch's death.

Railway strikes were cancelled on Thursday in response to the queen's death. "We express our deepest condolences to her family, friends and the country," Mick Lynch, the general secretary of the National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers, said in a statement announcing that a three-day strike scheduled for next week would be suspended. "RMT joins the whole nation in paying its respects for Queen Elizabeth," the statement said.

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HEADLINE	09/08 CIA chief: Russia invasion looks like failure
SOURCE	https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/08/world/europe/putin-russia-ukraine-cia.html
GIST	<p>Six months into "a very tough slog of a war," Ukraine has begun to mount a counteroffensive and Russia's invasion can only be seen as a failure, the director of the C.I.A., William J. Burns, said Thursday.</p> <p>Citing the counterattacks in the south and around Kharkiv in the northeast, Mr. Burns said that Russia's president, Vladimir V. Putin, had badly underestimated Ukraine's courage and capacity for combat.</p> <p>While the final chapter of the war is yet to be written, Mr. Burns said it was "hard to see Putin's record in the war as anything but a failure."</p> <p>Mr. Burns said that Mr. Putin was surrounded by advisers who are unwilling to challenge him and that the Russian leader mistakenly believed that European resolve will waver and American attention will wander the longer the conflict drags on.</p>

“Putin’s bet right now is that he is going to be tougher than the Ukrainians, the Europeans, the Americans,” Mr. Burns said, speaking at the Billington CyberSecurity conference in Washington. “I believe, and my colleagues at C.I.A. believe, that Putin is as wrong about that bet as he was profoundly wrong in his assumptions going back to last February about Ukrainian will to resist.”

That has had profound consequences, Mr. Burns said.

“Not only has the weakness of the Russian military been exposed,” he said, “but there is going to be long-term damage done to the Russian economy and to generations of Russians.”

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HEADLINE	09/08 Covid's toll on Native Americans
SOURCE	https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/08/briefing/covid-death-toll-native-americans.html
GIST	<p>Carol Schumacher of the Navajo Nation had grappled with untimely deaths; her mother died at 65 of pulmonary disease, and her father died at the same age in a car crash caused by a drunken driver. But she was not prepared for the devastation of Covid: Since it arrived in the U.S. more than two years ago, she has lost 42 family members to the virus.</p> <p>Dealing with the massive death toll strained her own health, Schumacher told our colleagues. “I just wasn’t mentally prepared to deal with so much loss,” she said.</p> <p>That loss has been tragically common among Native Americans, the C.D.C. revealed last week: From 2019 to 2021, their life expectancy fell from 71.8 years to 65.2. Covid was largely to blame.</p> <p>Typically, experts start to worry when they see drops in life expectancy that measure in just tenths of a year; Native Americans lost nearly seven years. The drop erases the equivalent of more than four decades of American life expectancy gains. And the average Native American person is now expected to live as long as the average American did in 1944.</p> <p>There is no one explanation for Covid’s death toll in these communities. But the main causes appear to involve poverty. Native Americans tend to have higher rates of underlying health problems that exacerbate Covid, as well as worse access to health care.</p> <p>“Even prior to the pandemic, rates of death among Indigenous people were higher in lots of categories,” said Dr. Laura Hammitt, an epidemiologist at Johns Hopkins University. Covid magnified those health disparities, causing a drop in life expectancy with no modern precedent in the U.S.</p> <p>Historical problems</p> <p>Since vaccines became available, Covid deaths among Americans have typically tracked closely with vaccination rates. For example, resistance against vaccines in predominantly Republican communities has led to more Covid deaths in recent months among white Americans than among Black or Hispanic Americans — a shift from the early days of the pandemic, as this newsletter has explained.</p> <p>The link breaks down when it comes to Native Americans. Vaccination rates among Native Americans are higher than they are among Black or Hispanic Americans, according to C.D.C. data. Yet Native Americans have died from Covid at one of the highest rates of any race or ethnicity since the start of the pandemic...</p> <p>Experts say other factors, besides vaccination rates, are to blame.</p> <p>Among them: Native Americans have some of the highest rates of health conditions, such as obesity and diabetes, that make a person much more likely to die from Covid.</p> <p>Health care is also often inaccessible. The Indian Health Service, a federal program that provides care to more than two million Native Americans, has a fraction of the funding on a per-person basis received by</p>

Medicare, Medicaid or the Veterans Health Administration. “How can somebody think this is not a problem? Yet it’s become normal,” said Loretta Christensen, the service’s chief medical officer.

As a result, Native Americans frequently have to travel long distances to get health care. Its quality can be shoddy. A quarter of Native Americans reported experiencing discrimination when visiting a doctor or a health clinic, [one poll found](#). Cultural and language barriers can also make it difficult for Indigenous people to get the care they want. Given those obstacles, some try to tough out illness at home, with potentially deadly results.

Poverty can play a more direct role, too. Roughly one in four Native Americans live in poverty. The stress from it can worsen health, studies have found.

Consider Arizona, one of the states with the highest share of Native Americans. There, the highest Covid death rates strongly overlap with counties where more Native Americans live and where poverty is the highest. They also correlate with the places with the least access to internet (a sign of economic neglect)...

Widespread poverty limits what precautions people can take to avoid Covid. People living paycheck to paycheck can’t afford to take time off work to avoid spreading or catching the virus. Native Americans also often lack access to internet, electricity and running water — making remote work, virtual schooling or telemedicine impossible.

And Native Americans often live in crowded, multigenerational homes. So if they are sick, they can easily spread the virus to the rest of the family, including older relatives who are much more vulnerable to Covid.

In other communities, the presence of one or some of these issues has made Covid deadlier. But Native Americans are dealing with all of these problems at once — the kinds of conditions that allow a pandemic to flourish.

The suffering of Native Americans shows that preventing deadly pandemics isn’t just about containing the pathogens that cause them, but also about improving the health of communities across the board.

For now, the vaccines offer the best protection against severe illness from Covid. Now that the federal government has authorized the next generation of Covid vaccines, the most important step people can take to protect themselves is to get their shots.

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HEADLINE	09/09 Britain longest reigning monarch dies at 96
SOURCE	https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/08/world/europe/queen-elizabeth-dead.html
GIST	<p>LONDON — Queen Elizabeth II, Britain’s longest-serving monarch, whose broadly popular seven-decade reign survived tectonic shifts in her country’s post-imperial society and weathered successive challenges posed by the romantic choices, missteps and imbroglios of her descendants, died on Thursday at Balmoral Castle in Scotland, her summer retreat. She was 96.</p> <p>The royal family announced her death online, saying she had died peacefully. The announcement did not specify a cause.</p> <p>Her death elevated her eldest son, Charles, to the throne as King Charles III. In a statement, he said: “The death of my beloved Mother, Her Majesty the Queen, is a moment of the greatest sadness for me and all members of my family.</p> <p>“We mourn profoundly the passing of a cherished Sovereign and a much-loved Mother. I know her loss will be deeply felt throughout the country, the Realms and the Commonwealth, and by countless people around the world.”</p>

Earlier Thursday, Buckingham Palace said that the queen had been placed under medical supervision and that her doctors were “concerned” about her health. She had remained at Balmoral for much of the summer. On Wednesday evening, she abruptly canceled a virtual meeting with members of her Privy Council after her doctors advised her to rest.

A day earlier, [she met with the incoming Conservative prime minister](#), Liz Truss — the 15th prime minister the queen dealt with during her reign — though in doing so, because of infirmity, she broke with longstanding tradition by receiving her at Balmoral rather than at Buckingham Palace.

Elizabeth’s long years as sovereign were a time of enormous upheaval, in which she sought to project and protect the royal family as a rare bastion of permanence in a world of shifting values.

At [her coronation on June 2, 1953](#), a year after she acceded to the throne, she surveyed a realm emerging from an empire of such geographical reach that it was said the sun never set on it. But by the new century, as she navigated her advancing years with increasing frailty, the frontiers had shrunk back. As Britain prepared [to leave the European Union](#) in 2020, [a clamor for independence in Scotland](#) was rekindled, potentially threatening to narrow her horizons yet further.

Her coronation was the first royal event of its kind to be broadcast almost in full on television. But it was a token of the changes — and global fascination — that accompanied her time as queen that her reign became the subject of a Hollywood movie and [a blockbuster series on Netflix](#), while her family’s travails offered voluminous grist to the busy mill of social media.

Just as telling in the chronicles of her rule, Britons’ unquestioning deference to the crown had been supplanted by a gamut of emotions ranging from loyal and often affectionate tolerance to unbridled hostility. The monarchy was forced, more than ever, to justify its existence in the face of often skeptical public attention and scrutiny.

Elizabeth, though, remained determinedly committed to the hallmark aloofness, formality and pageantry by which the monarchy has long sought to preserve the mystique that underpinned its existence and survival. Her courtly and reserved manner changed little.

As [the coronavirus pandemic of 2020](#) spread to Britain, forcing people to suspend their normal lives and social ways, [the queen left Buckingham Palace](#), in central London, for Windsor Castle, west of the capital, a move that recalled the decades she had spent inspiring genuine affection among many Britons.

It was to Windsor that she and her younger sister, Margaret, were sent to escape the threat of German bombing after the outbreak of World War II in 1939. It was from Windsor, too, that she made her first radio broadcast as a princess in 1940, age 14, ostensibly directed at British children who had been evacuated to North America, according to her biographer Ben Pimlott, but also intended to sway official thinking in Washington, which had not yet entered the war.

“My sister, Margaret Rose, and I feel so much for you, as we know from experience what it means to be away from those we love most of all,” Elizabeth said then.

In 2020, too, she sought to equate her plight with that of her subjects. “Many of us will need to find new ways of staying in touch with each other and making sure that loved ones are safe,” she said in a statement released after she and her husband, Prince Philip, arrived at Windsor. “I am certain that we are up to that challenge. You can be assured that my family and I stand ready to play our part.”

On [April 5, 2020](#), in a televised address that evoked her 1940 broadcast, she urged her subjects to fight the virus with the same bulldog tenacity that wartime Britons had shown. It was only the fourth special broadcast of her monarchy outside of her scheduled TV appearances at Christmas.

“I hope in the years to come everyone will be able to take pride in how they responded to this challenge,” she said. “And those who come after us will say that the Britons of this generation were as strong as any.”

She added, “We should take comfort that while we may have more still to endure, better days will return. We will be with our friends again; we will be with our families again; we will meet again,” the last line a direct reference to a wartime song by [Vera Lynn](#), “We’ll Meet Again.”

In 2017, Elizabeth celebrated [the 70th anniversary of her marriage to Philip](#), whom she first met when he was a teenager in the 1930s. Until [his death last April](#), Philip had settled into an unusual role, [usually two steps behind his wife](#), providing her with stoic support, even if his occasional tactless comments hurt his image.

Despite many reports of early peccadilloes on Philip’s part — hidden from public view with the help of cooperative newspaper barons — their bonds endured, a throwback to earlier decades of more durable relationships. And his death, their second son, Prince Andrew, said, “left a huge void in her life.”

Some predicted that Elizabeth would recede into the shadows after Philip’s death, much as Queen Victoria did after the death of her husband, Prince Albert. But she surprised many by re-emerging as a spry presence in public life, entertaining world leaders at a summit meeting in Cornwall in June 2021 and playing host to Bill Gates and other businesspeople at Windsor Castle after a climate-change investment conference.

Still, the hectic schedule took a toll. Elizabeth was photographed using a walking stick, a rare concession to her stiff knees. She was [kept overnight in a London hospital](#) in October 2021 after what aides said was an episode of exhaustion. Few doubted the effect of the loss of Philip, who had been a stabilizing force in the family.

Elizabeth’s own children seemed less immune to marital calamity.

In 1992, Prince Charles and his immensely popular wife, Diana, agreed to separate, as did Prince Andrew and his wife, Sarah Ferguson. Elizabeth’s second child, Princess Anne, divorced her husband, Mark Phillips, the same year. Coupled with a series of other upheavals, the queen labeled 1992 her “[annus horribilis](#).”

But worse was to come.

In 1997, [the death of Diana](#) in a car crash in Paris wrote some of the darkest chapters of Elizabeth’s reign, and for a while the monarchy itself seemed threatened by a huge wave of public support for Diana that left the queen seeming cold and emotionally estranged from her subjects.

The monarchy survived, but well into the 21st century new challenges emerged.

In 2019, Elizabeth was dragged unceremoniously and against all previous rules of protocol [into political machinations over Brexit](#), as Britain’s withdrawal from the European Union was known, a debate from which she would once have remained remote.

In the same year, Prince Andrew became embroiled in scandal after giving [a disastrous television interview](#) in which he seemed unaware of the toxic impact of a friendship with [Jeffrey Epstein](#), the convicted American sexual predator. Accused of sexual impropriety with a teenage girl introduced to him by Mr. Epstein — an allegation he has denied — the prince, also known as the Duke of York, withdrew from public life that November. (In January this year, he was forced by Buckingham Palace to relinquish his military titles and royal charities, a stinging rebuke by the royal family a day after a federal judge in New York allowed a sexual abuse case against him to go ahead.)

In her annual Christmas address to the nation in 2019, the queen described the year as “bumpy.”

It was about to get bumpier.

In 2020, in a move that was perhaps as humiliating as any family convulsion the queen had confronted, her grandson Prince Harry, the sixth in line to the throne, caught her and the rest of the family off guard when he and his American wife, Meghan Markle, [announced plans to “step back”](#) from royal duties — a move that some commentators compared to the decision in 1936 by the queen’s uncle, King Edward VIII, to abdicate so that he could proceed with plans to marry the American Wallis Simpson.

Yet far from carving out a “progressive new role within this institution,” as they had hopefully declared, the young couple were forced into a hard exit, agreeing in a severance deal with Buckingham Palace to give up their loftiest royal titles, forgo state funding and repay at least \$3 million in taxpayer money that had been used to refurbish their official residence on the grounds of Windsor Castle.

As the new decade unfolded and the end of Elizabeth’s reign approached, it seemed as if the House of Windsor was under assault from within as never before, a process compounded with spectacular global fanfare by a two-hour television encounter between [Meghan and Harry and Oprah Winfrey](#).

During the show, broadcast from California first in the United States, then a day later in Britain, the couple assailed an unidentified member of the royal household as racist. Ms. Winfrey said later that Prince Harry had assured her that he and his wife had not been referring to the queen or Prince Philip. [In the interview](#), Ms Markle said that she had felt so isolated in her unaccustomed royal role that she had actively contemplated suicide.

Buckingham Palace was taken aback, and it responded with [a terse, 61-word statement](#) that sought to contain the drama within the familiar royal palisade of privacy. The royal family was “stunned to learn the full extent of how challenging the last few years have been for Harry and Meghan,” the statement said.

“The issues raised, particularly that of race, are concerning,” it said. “While some recollections may vary, they are taken very seriously and will be addressed by the family privately.”

Despite the challenges, the queen pressed ahead with her Platinum Jubilee celebration in June this year to commemorate her seven decades as sovereign with a four-day public holiday, complete with a star-studded televised concert outside the gates of Buckingham Palace. But in the run-up to the occasion, the twin themes of failing health and family frictions seemed to blur together.

In February, she tested positive for the coronavirus, and in May she was forced by what Buckingham Palace called “episodic mobility issues” to cancel an appearance in Parliament to deliver a speech setting out the government’s legislative agenda — one of her most important public ceremonies.

It was the first time in almost 60 years that she had missed the event. She had been absent from it only twice before during her reign because of pregnancies with princes Andrew and Edward, her youngest child.

Significantly, Prince Charles, the heir to the throne, read the speech on her behalf, with the queen’s bejeweled ceremonial crown — the Imperial State Crown — placed next to him, as if to assert her symbolic presence.

Just days earlier, her office had announced that when the royal family appeared on the balcony of Buckingham Palace during the proposed Platinum Jubilee — regarded as the most potent of royal photo opportunities — Prince Andrew, Prince Harry and his wife Meghan would not be present.

Ostensibly, their exclusions were because the monarch wished to limit attendance to “those members of the royal family who are currently undertaking official public duties on behalf of the Queen,” in the words of a palace spokesman. But many Britons interpreted the move as a snub to family members who had brought unwelcome comment and unflattering headlines to the closing years of the queen’s reign.

Prince Harry is one of eight grandchildren who, along with Elizabeth’s four children, survive the queen, as do 12 great-grandchildren.

A Dazzling Parade

On Sept. 9, 2015, Elizabeth [surpassed Queen Victoria](#) as her country's longest-serving monarch, and after the [death of Thailand's king](#) on Oct. 13, 2016, she became the modern world's longest reigning. Even in her older years, her subjects saw her as unusually robust and at ease with the pageantry of her office, as she was during a [four-day celebration in June 2012](#) commemorating the 60th anniversary of her attaining the crown.

The only other British monarch to celebrate a diamond jubilee was Queen Victoria, Elizabeth's great-great-grandmother, whose reign lasted 63 years and seven months before her death in 1901.

Elizabeth's diamond jubilee, which included a dazzling pageant of 1,000 vessels on the River Thames through London, coaxed forth an outpouring of public enthusiasm that seemed likely to cement the royal family's place in British society, despite questions about the monarchy's future. Although Prince Charles, Elizabeth's eldest son, was her direct heir, many Britons seemed more drawn to Charles's own son Prince William, the Duke of Cambridge, who [married a commoner](#), Kate Middleton, in April 2011, to much public acclaim.

The only departure from the tight choreography of the jubilee events was the illness of Prince Philip, who was 90 at the time. He was taken to a hospital with a bladder infection during the celebrations after spending hours in the biting cold atop the royal barge.

There had been concerns about the queen's health ever since she missed [church services on Christmas Day](#) in 2016 and on [New Year's Day in 2017](#) because of what Buckingham Palace described as a "heavy cold." Those absences were the first time in about 30 years that she had missed a holiday service.

The queen made her first public appearance of 2017 on Jan. 8, after a month's absence. The next month, she celebrated her sapphire jubilee, becoming the first British monarch to reign for 65 years.

Elizabeth's courtly and reserved manner changed little as Britain shed its empire abroad and was transformed at home, from a deferential and self-doubting nation, impoverished by World War II, into a brash, wealth-driven, less respectful and more self-centered place.

In the years after [the death of her father, King George VI](#), in 1952, she witnessed — and exploited — the rise of television as it became the overwhelming vehicle of national communication for a generation obsessed with celebrity. Her coronation in 1953 was the first in Britain to be broadcast in almost its entirety on television. (The BBC had televised the royal procession through the streets of London [in 1937](#) for the coronation of King George VI.) In 1997, the monarchy started [its own website](#).

In a further leap into realms once undreamed of, in 2007 [her traditional Christmastime message](#) was broadcast on a royal channel on YouTube — 75 years after Elizabeth's grandfather became the first British monarch to broadcast a similar holiday message by radio. And in 2018, TV viewers were treated to a relaxed, unscripted monarch when she appeared in [her first on-camera interview](#) for a documentary about her coronation. (In deference to palace sensitivities, the interview was described as a "conversation.") In 2009, the royal family [opened a Twitter account](#), which currently has about 4.7 million followers.

The Nation's Anchor

So enduring was Elizabeth's grip on the nation's supreme office that her reign overlapped the tenures of 15 British prime ministers — from Winston Churchill to Liz Truss — and 14 [American presidents](#), from Harry S. Truman to Joseph R. Biden Jr. (She met with all except Lyndon B. Johnson.)

Although her role was largely ceremonial as a constitutional monarch without executive power, her supporters maintained that she played an important, less tangible role as the nation's anchor, held in place by an unspoken consensus between queen and subjects.

And while she wielded no formal political power, her weekly audiences with prime ministers gave her insight into the nation's business, and her appearances at international gatherings were seen as enhancing British prestige.

There were occasions when her presence even strengthened official policy. In June 2012, in what generations had been raised to see as the most improbable of encounters, [the queen shook hands with Martin McGuinness](#), a onetime commander of the Irish Republican Army, a very public symbol of commitment to peace in Northern Ireland.

The setting alone, in Belfast, Northern Ireland, evoked [three decades of sectarian strife](#) that drew the British forces, of which the queen was the nominal commander in chief, into a fight with I.R.A. guerrillas seeking a united Ireland, before [the Good Friday peace agreement](#) of 1998 ended the so-called Troubles.

Critics nonetheless called the monarchy a costly and unloved anachronism, drawing its wealth from a nation that never formally assented to the royals' luxurious lifestyle in palaces and castles. The queen alone maintained residences at Buckingham Palace, Windsor Castle and the Sandringham estate in Norfolk as well as at Balmoral.

For the paparazzi and the tabloid news media, some of the royal family's more flamboyant members offered fertile ground. In 1992, [photographs appeared in British newspapers](#) showing Sarah Ferguson, the Duchess of York, who had separated from Prince Andrew months earlier, topless and entwined with a wealthy American businessman.

In 2012, Charles's son Prince Harry, then third in line to the throne, was photographed cavorting naked at a party in Las Vegas. He had earlier been seen [wearing Nazi dress at a costume party](#). Later, a French magazine published photographs of the former Ms. Middleton, now the Duchess of Cambridge, sunbathing topless. The episodes raised questions about the limits of royal privacy and threatened to revive old strains with the news media that had reached their nadir during the doomed marriage of Charles and Diana.

Married in 1981, the couple fell into adulterous liaisons that led to divorce in 1996. But in that time, Diana, Princess of Wales — trailed by paparazzi — became a glamorous royal idol with a human touch. Tony Blair, who was prime minister when she died, called her the "people's princess."

The death of the princess, chased by paparazzi, in a car crash in Paris on Aug. 31, 1997, convulsed Britain in a bout of public grief that left the queen isolated at Balmoral.

For days the monarch refused to acknowledge publicly the mourning and the mountainous floral tributes in the streets and parks of London in honor of the woman whose image and behavior had left the queen looking remote and old-fashioned.

Diana's relationship with Elizabeth had been cold. Her zest for contact with the public had seemed only to highlight the royal family's contrasting reputation as emotionally distant and dysfunctional. The moments after [Diana's death](#) became grist for [a 2006 movie, "The Queen,"](#) starring Helen Mirren, that portrayed Elizabeth as detached and slow to accept the crisis breaking around her.

Clinging to regal protocols, the queen at first refused to allow the Union Jack to fly at half-staff over Buckingham Palace, insisting that her role as a grandmother was to comfort the princess' sons, William and Harry, in private.

But her initial refusal to address the nation or even leave her Scottish redoubt left the monarchy balanced on a knife edge as newspapers led Diana's myriad mourners in a chorus of unparalleled disapproval, threatening to rupture the public consent vital to the monarchy's survival. Finally — too late, some said — the queen relented.

She traveled from Balmoral to London, moving among crowds of mourners, and, in an address broadcast to the nation from Buckingham Palace on Sept. 5, 1997 — five days after the car crash in Paris — [the queen spoke in remarkably personal terms](#) for a British monarch, praising Diana as “an exceptional and gifted human being.”

“I for one believe that there are lessons to be drawn from her life and from the extraordinary and moving reaction to her death,” the queen said.

Unusually, the broadcast was live, showing the queen’s advisers’ awareness of the 24-hour rolling news era. Diana, the queen said, “never lost her capacity to smile and laugh, nor to inspire others with her warmth and kindness.” For the first time in Elizabeth’s reign, Britons saw their monarch come close to an apology.

“We have all been trying in our different ways to cope,” she said. “It is not easy to express a sense of loss, since the initial shock is often succeeded by a mixture of other feelings: disbelief, incomprehension, anger and concern for those who remain.”

And, in what was perhaps the most difficult and heavily symbolic gesture, the queen, flanked by members of the royal family, emerged on foot from the black wrought-iron gates of Buckingham Palace on Sept. 6, as the gun carriage bearing Diana’s coffin passed by on its way to Westminster Abbey. At that moment, the queen bowed her head in tacit acknowledgment of a woman who had stolen Britain’s heart, and thus had threatened its queen.

A Monarchy Restored

The funeral was a turning point. Elizabeth had weathered the ferocious storm of public disapproval and quietly went out of her way to ensure that in the future the British people would be drawn at least symbolically into her life. She held huge parties in 2002, 2006 and 2012 to celebrate her golden jubilee, her 80th birthday and her diamond jubilee. The closely choreographed celebrations spoke to the balance she sought to strike between a cautious opening to the public and the aloofness of her role and personality.

Even when confronted with unscripted departures, as on a state visit to the United States in 2007, when President George W. Bush almost misspoke in her presence to imply that she might be two centuries older than she was, she maintained her composure with just a regal glance.

“She gave me a look that only a mother could give a child,” Mr. Bush said after the queen peered quizzically at him on a shared podium.

Her personal behavior, unlike that of most of her family, was beyond reproach, never tainted by even the remotest hint of scandal. Elizabeth offered her subjects a mirror of the high moral standards that many might aspire to but most generally fail to attain.

Throughout Elizabeth’s reign, social upheaval forced changes in the monarchy. But she never rushed to adopt them, strengthening the sense of a regal continuum that existed in a world apart, functioning according to an opaque code to which most Britons were not privy. Her reluctance to rush into new ways reinforced her critics’ depiction of the monarchy as irrelevant and out of touch — an expensive throwback to a distant history of bejeweled royals disporting themselves in palaces and castles at the public’s expense.

Yet her public image was managed and massaged as adroitly as that of any movie star or corporate executive.

In a way, the mystique of the monarchy was no surprise: The queen was born into a world apart. She never attended school or classes; she was brought up and educated at home by nannies, governesses and private tutors.

From the beginning, her encounters with the public were scripted and limited. From the moment her uncle King Edward VIII abdicated in a scandal over his relationship with the American divorcée Wallis Simpson in 1936 — when the future queen was 10 — she entered a line of succession that set her far apart from Britons as a figurehead-in-waiting.

When her father, King George VI, died, she was 25, a young woman whose known interests were limited to horseback riding and tending to her entourage of corgis.

But it was that upbringing, steeped in the values of a monarchy that had faced none of the pressures of the television era and postwar Britain, that made her often seem grudgingly slow to adapt to a world much different from the one she had been born into.

The Young Princess

Princess Elizabeth Alexandra Mary, daughter of the Duchess and Duke of York, was born on Bruton Street in central London in the early hours of April 21, 1926. At her birth she was third in line to the throne after her uncle and father, but the prospect of her attaining the crown seemed remote.

She was born into the House of Windsor, a member of a dynasty that had been known as the Saxe-Coburg and Gotha until the name was changed in 1917, during World War I, to avoid its connotations of Britain's German enemies.

The family soon moved to an aristocratic townhouse on a thoroughfare called Piccadilly, and the young princess lived in a top-floor suite of rooms while the family was in London. As a toddler, she spent much time at Scottish castles in Glamis and Balmoral. But she soon became used to the family ways (which would later extend to her own style of motherhood) when her parents left for a six-month official tour to Panama, Fiji, New Zealand and Australia.

From age 7 until just before her marriage in 1947, Princess Elizabeth, and Princess Margaret Rose, were looked after by a governess, Marion Crawford, known as Crawfie, who came to be seen as a traitor to the royals when she published her memoirs in 1950 against the family's wishes.

The young Princess Elizabeth was a keen pony rider. Little more was known of her by the public. And her young life, already isolated, changed significantly after King George V, her grandfather, died in early 1936, and when her uncle abdicated later that year, elevating her father to the throne. From then on, her life was that of the first person in line to the throne.

Much later, Princess Margaret recalled asking her whether their father's coronation in 1937 — when Elizabeth was 11 — meant that the older sister would one day be queen. "Yes, I suppose it does," the young Elizabeth replied.

But the world was about to change in a much bigger way. With the outbreak of war in 1939, the princesses moved to Windsor Castle to avoid German bombing raids at a time when many other children were evacuated from the cities to safer places. Indeed, Elizabeth made [her first recorded broadcast](#) in 1940, at age 14, beamed to British children evacuated to North America and elsewhere.

According to Mr. Pimlott, her biographer, Elizabeth shot her first stag in the Scottish hills near Balmoral at 16 and hunted with dogs in Gloucestershire a year later. But she did not attend a college or university, where she might have met other teenagers. Rather, she led a royal life, inspecting the soldiers of the Grenadier Guards as their honorary colonel in 1942, her first public engagement. By 18 she was performing constitutional duties on behalf of her father, when he traveled to Italy in 1944.

The only time she is known to have experienced communal education was in early 1945 — shortly before the end of World War II — when she was enrolled briefly in the Auxiliary Territorial Service as an honorary subaltern, training in the skills of driving and maintaining military vehicles. [Photographs of her](#) in her drab military uniform became part of the royal propaganda effort to raise wartime morale — and to show the upper crust doing its part.

For the public and for her family, the main issue that arose with the end of hostilities and the beginning of a new era in postwar Britain was the question of whom she would marry — not a matter to be settled by common trial and error.

The most suitable candidate was deemed by the princess and her courtiers to be Prince Philip of Greece and Denmark, the son of Prince Andrew of Greece and Denmark and Princess Alice of Battenberg. The royal genealogy traces both Elizabeth's and Philip's families to Queen Victoria, just one of several ways in which the prince and princess were related within a narrow coterie of European royalty.

The two had met in the 1930s. Prince Philip, five years her senior, was building a reputation — which he maintained for many years to come — as something of a playboy. But he also had what military people called a “good war” with the British fleet in the Mediterranean and the Pacific.

In 1947, Princess Elizabeth turned 21 during a royal tour of South Africa, then part of the British Commonwealth, and, in a radio broadcast to Britain's empire and former colonies, she declared to her listeners that “my whole life, whether it be long or short, shall be devoted to your service and to the service of our great imperial family to which we all belong.”

She continued, “But I shall not have strength to carry out this resolution alone unless you join in it with me, as I now invite you to do.”

It was a theme that would recur, as in her Christmas address in 1957, five years after she became queen: “I cannot lead you into battle, I do not give you laws or administer justice, but I can do something else,” she said. “I can give you my heart.”

On both occasions, Elizabeth seemed to acknowledge the frail limits of a constitutional monarch: a ceremonial head of state with no real political power, the scion of a dynasty rooted in 19th-century Germany whose vast wealth and palatial privileges survived, ultimately, only with the public's consent.

Part of that consent is derived from pageantry, and few people are more skilled in pageantry than the British royals. On Nov. 20, 1947, Princess Elizabeth married Prince Philip, and despite the parlous state of the postwar British economy, the wedding offered a panoply of crowned heads and a statement of continuity.

A Queen at 25

Elizabeth was 22 when Prince Charles was born a year later. In his early years, he was treated much the same way his mother had been as an infant. When his father was stationed on naval duties in Malta, his mother flew out to join him. After five weeks in Malta, she returned to London and spent several days attending to other business (including a day at the horse races, an abiding passion) before being reunited with Charles at Sandringham, in Norfolk, where her parents were also staying.

In 1950, Princess Elizabeth had her second child, Princess Anne, but the pace of her life as a representative of the royal family was quickening. In the fall of 1951, Princess Elizabeth and Prince Philip toured Canada and the United States before embarking on what was supposed to be a lengthy trip to Australia and New Zealand, starting with a stop in what was still at the time the British colony of Kenya.

And it was there, far from her own land, that she became queen. Back home, her father, King George VI, had cancer, and in September 1951 his left lung was removed. He died in his sleep and was found dead in his bed on Feb. 6, 1952, but Elizabeth, heir to the throne, was at a remote Kenyan game-viewing camp called Treetops.

Princess Elizabeth — now Queen Elizabeth II, under the rule of automatic succession — returned from the camp to a lodge, unaware for four hours because of communications difficulties that her father had died and that she was Britain's new sovereign. She was 25.

The coronation came later, on June 2, 1953, a moment described by Princess Margaret as like a phoenix rising from the ashes — the emblem of postwar recovery. As if to mark the occasion, news broke that two climbers from a British-led expedition had been the first to conquer Mount Everest.

The coronation was an extraordinary mixture of ancient ritual and contemporary technology. Across the land, Britons huddled in front of early-model black-and-white television sets in veneered cabinets or celebrated with street parties.

With more than 8,000 guests at Westminster Abbey, the ceremony culminated in the secret anointing of the new monarch under a canopy that kept her beyond the view of the congregation and the cameras. Then, the newly crowned queen returned to her palace, carrying scepter and orb, with almost 30,000 troops, 29 bands and 27 carriages to accompany her. Three million people lined the route as her golden horse-drawn state coach rolled by.

Within months of the coronation, the queen and her husband were again on tour, resuming and expanding the itinerary abandoned after the death of the king.

The marathon tour, from Bermuda to Australia, was a turning point, as much in the adulation that greeted the new queen as in the history of the empire her forebears had ruled. In 1957, as that empire unraveled, Ghana became independent, as India had 10 years earlier.

The royal family came under more scrutiny, too: Princess Margaret for her romantic interests, Prince Philip for an increasingly public knack for diplomatic gaffes.

Television was advancing: In 1957, for the first time, the queen agreed to televise her annual Christmas Day message, previously broadcast by radio.

The country was changing, too, as its empire shrank. Across the Channel, the European Union began to germinate in the late 1950s, offering a new set of alliances and rivalries to challenge the declining empire. In 1965, the white minority regime in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) defied the queen and her country by unilaterally declaring independence.

At home, the queen's subjects were looking for new icons and idols.

A Brewing Storm

The 1960s heralded "Swinging London," with a new permissiveness and culture built around bands like the Beatles (honored by the queen in 1965) and the Rolling Stones. Satirical television shows broke long-held taboos to lampoon the monarchy, leading the queen's image managers to cooperate with the makers of a long BBC documentary that portrayed the royals in a more favorable light.

In the 1970s, the pendulum swung back to economic malaise, with the winter of discontent and the three-day workweek.

The queen had two more sons: Prince Andrew in 1960 and Prince Edward in 1964. Her children were introduced to a different world from the one their mother had known when she was growing up. Prince Charles attended the physically rigorous Gordonstoun boarding school in Scotland and went on to Trinity College, Cambridge.

But something in the public perception of the monarchy was shifting. The tone of royal reporting was becoming more aggressive, just as the royal family showed itself as vulnerable to the strains and stresses consuming ordinary people in a land where traditional moral values had been battered by the permissiveness of the 1960s.

Princess Margaret and her husband, Lord Snowdon, divorced in 1978 — the first royal marriage in the queen's immediate entourage to founder. In 1979, the royal family was rocked by the death of Lord Louis Mountbatten, who was murdered by an I.R.A. bomb aboard his fishing boat, an attack that left three others

dead. Known to the royals as “Uncle Dickie,” Lord Mountbatten was the queen’s second cousin, Prince Philip’s uncle and a mentor to Prince Charles, who later described him as “the grandfather I never had.”

And perhaps the biggest storm to buffet the queen began to brew on the sparkling day in July 1981 when the family took into its ranks, possibly with some reluctance, a newcomer who was to bring turmoil to the royal hearth: Lady Diana Spencer.

As R.W. Apple Jr. [reported in The New York Times](#): “The 2,500 guests inside Christopher Wren’s Baroque masterpiece, St. Paul’s Cathedral, the hundreds of thousands who watched the wedding party ride in magnificent horse-drawn carriages from Buckingham Palace to the cathedral and back, and the 700 million television viewers around the world witnessed a fairy tale come to life: the handsome Prince Charles in naval uniform marrying the lovely 20-year-old Diana Spencer, daughter of an earl, amid the sort of splendor the modern world has all but forgotten.”

The fairy-tale moment did not endure, and by the time the couple’s emotional complexities had spilled over into lurid tabloid coverage of their estrangement and dalliances, the queen confronted a remarkable challenge. The center of gravity of public sympathy had shifted away. The nation was increasingly divided between supporters of her son and those of her daughter-in-law — a contest the unhappy couple played out through leaks and innuendo that appeared in the print and broadcast news media.

“The royal family, it came to be said, was not a model of domestic virtue and private happiness,” Mr. Pimlott wrote, “but, in the modern jargon, dysfunctional.” No longer was royalty shielded from what he called “public prurience” and “a press which now had almost no incentive to give the royal family the loyal protection it had enjoyed since the 19th century.”

The challenges did not stop there. In November 1992, a fire broke out at the queen’s beloved Windsor Castle, causing millions of dollars’ worth of damage. She faced criticism for her exemption from [paying the same income tax](#) as her subjects. And royal marriages were breaking. As the catalog of problems expanded, the queen noted famously that “1992 is not a year on which I shall look back with undiluted pleasure.”

“In the words of one of my more sympathetic correspondents,” she said, “it has turned out to be an ‘annus horribilis.’”

The queen responded with a familiar blend of aloofness and belated acknowledgment that the public demanded changes from her.

On With the Show

The “annus horribilis” drew to an appropriately messy end when, on Dec. 9, 1992, Charles and Diana announced their separation after 11 years of increasingly unhappy marriage. The course had been set for much greater division and tragedy with Diana’s death in 1997, the event that shook the monarchy to the core.

It was a measure of the queen’s determination to protect and promote her rule that she not only endured the public challenge but did so in a way that cemented rather than diminished public acceptance of her position and her manner.

Despite the aftershocks of Diana’s death — including Charles’s subsequent public relationship with his longtime mistress, Camilla Parker-Bowles, [whom he married in 2005](#) and who now bears the title the Queen Consort — Elizabeth continued with unshakable commitment to the rituals of her rule.

Huge summer garden parties filled the grounds of Buckingham Palace with hundreds of invited guests. At such gatherings, the queen would be escorted by aides and introduced to selected guests she had never met before, many of whom marveled at her diminutive stature and gracious manner. The queen and her family continued to honor citizens with awards, medals and titles.

Foreign dignitaries were received and treated to state dinners and regal rides in gilded carriages along the Mall stretching from Buckingham Palace to Trafalgar Square. But other lessons seemed to have been learned. If this was to be an era of a more public monarchy, then the queen would control the pace of change, permitting a smidgen more access in a more modern manner, without abandoning the aloofness that underpinned the monarchy.

The extent of her success was clear by 2002 when, at 76, Elizabeth celebrated 50 years as queen with a four-day national holiday. She closed out the occasion with what Warren Hoge of The Times called “[the traditional wave from the balcony](#)” of Buckingham Palace as choirs sang ‘Land of Hope and Glory.’”

“There was no doubt that the emotional and institutional hold on the nation that her presence represents had been emphatically revalidated,” Mr. Hoge wrote.

The shift from the closed early days of the monarchy was clear as one million people thronged the parks outside the gates of Buckingham Palace to watch a rock and pop concert on the palace grounds that was projected on giant screens. Brian May, the lead guitarist of the band Queen, played the national anthem, “God Save the Queen,” [in a live solo performance](#) from the roof of the palace.

“The black-and-white newsreels from 1952 show a country very different from the one in which we live today,” Tony Blair, then the prime minister, said in toasting the queen in 2002 at a formal lunch in the 17th-century Guildhall. “You have adapted the monarchy successfully to the modern world, and that has been a challenge because it is a world that can pay scant regard to tradition and often values passing fashions above enduring faith.”

The queen replied, “It has been a pretty remarkable 50 years by any standards.”

Part of the public sympathy for the queen in 2002 may have derived from her personal losses: [Her mother](#) and [her sister](#), Margaret, both died that year. And, although her role precluded direct political intervention, she used her position deftly to offer comfort to those facing loss.

After the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, she sent a message to New Yorkers, telling them, “Grief is the price we pay for love.” And after the attacks in her own capital on July 7, 2005, in which four suicide bombers killed 52 people, she told Londoners, “Atrocities such as these simply reinforce our sense of community, our humanity and our trust in the rule of law.”

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HEADLINE	09/09 Amid crises Europe turns to big spending
SOURCE	https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/09/world/europe/energy-prices-europe-austerity.html
GIST	<p>BRUSSELS — Nationalizations. Subsidies. Cash handouts. Price caps. Profit taxes. It’s back to 20th-century economics in Europe.</p> <p>Governments are resorting to old-school solutions, long dismissed as bad policy, throwing vast amounts of money at the energy crisis engulfing the region, in a bid to avert a political, social and economic meltdown.</p> <p>The standoff with Russia over Ukraine is upturning European economic orthodoxy at rapid speed with barely a peep of dissent at the European Union’s headquarters in Brussels, a bastion of neoliberalism that not so long ago imposed brutal austerity on its own members, most notably Greece, even after it became clear it was harmful.</p> <p>But today E.U. leaders see little choice. Russia has reduced to a trickle its supply of natural gas to most Europe Union countries, in retaliation for the bloc’s staunch support of Ukraine, and the cost of the fuel — and by extension, electricity — is at historic highs and rising.</p>

In response, E.U. governments have already earmarked more than \$350 billion to subsidize consumers, industry and utility companies; ministers are to meet on Friday to finalize the bloc's direct intervention in markets to grab excess profits, cap electricity prices and subsidize utilities companies.

"Government intervention is back in vogue in a really big way," said Mujtaba Rahman, Europe director at the consulting firm Eurasia.

"It's really about building public support through what is going to be an incredibly difficult winter and 2023, about containing Russian aggression, the liberal international order, the need to build public support to see the conflict through," he said, adding, "This is the price to be paid."

The huge public spending is in addition to a nearly trillion-dollar stimulus package adopted over the past year to deal with the economic fallout from the pandemic, mostly through borrowing. The ballooning debt load would have normally caused an uproar in the bloc, where fiscal conservatism has dominated policy and politics for years.

The lack of opposition is a measure of how fearful policymakers are that European consumers and businesses will bridle at shouldering the suddenly astronomical energy costs, ushering in social unrest and political chaos, as well as a recession.

"A few weeks like this and the European economy will just go into a full stop." Prime minister Alexander De Croo of Belgium said in an interview with Bloomberg on Thursday. "The risk of that is de-industrialization and severe risk of fundamental social unrest."

With memories still fresh of France's Yellow Vest movement — which was spawned as a revolt against an energy tax increase — spending billions and ditching the old orthodoxy may be the only way to keep voters on board with Europe's strong support of Ukraine against Russia.

"This is clearly an exceptional and one-off situation," said Daniel Gros, a German economist and director of the Centre for European Policy Studies, a Brussels-based think tank, who normally takes fiscally conservative positions. "It's different from increasing unemployment or social benefits structurally forever, and it's a special situation that won't last forever."

European leaders certainly hope so, because the spending levels would be hard to sustain. The German government on Sunday announced a \$65 billion support package, its third and largest so far, that includes direct cash handouts to the most vulnerable consumers and tax breaks to energy-intensive businesses.

The Belgian government has handed out \$100 to every household irrespective of income.

The Greek government, which faces the ballot box next year, has committed nearly \$7 billion, or about 4 percent of its annual economic output, in the past three months to subsidize all energy bills in the country. To finance most of this spending, the country has already put in place a levy on the excess revenues of energy companies that use sources other than natural gas.

The government of the Czech Republic on Sunday was pushed to announce support measures, having narrowly survived a no-confidence vote over the cost of electricity. In an early sign of the wider volatility the issue could introduce, tens of thousands took to the streets of Prague last weekend in demonstrations that seemed to be led by fringe groups protesting the country's membership in NATO and its support of Ukraine.

And, cash handouts and subsidies aside, more direct market interventions are afoot.

"The electricity market is no longer a functioning market because there is one actor, Putin, who is systematically trying to destroy it and to manipulate it," President Ursula von der Leyen of the European Commission said in a speech last week. "So we really have to react to that. And that is why we are addressing now the composition of the electricity market."

On Wednesday she unveiled her staff's proposals, which include a cap on what E.U. countries are allowed to pay Russia for natural gas, taxing energy companies' profits and suspending rules that make it illegal for governments to subsidize companies to permit the funding of utilities that are burning through cash to buy outrageously expensive fuels to make power.

The proposals will be debated by energy ministers Friday and the bloc could adopt a set of interventionist policies as early as this month, before the weather gets colder and the crunch is felt even more deeply.

The European Union's fiscal strictures normally seek to punish countries that exceed a deficit of 3 percent of annual economic output and a debt load of more than 60 percent of the output.

But those were suspended early in the pandemic to allow for a massive stimulus package to support economies that had been sunk by lockdowns and supply chain disruptions.

While E.U. leaders insisted that the diversion was only temporary, the change was imperative: The average deficits of E.U. countries grew to more than twice the permitted limit and average debt approached 90 percent of economic output.

In Germany, the bloc's biggest economy and chief fiscal hawk, which has a debt brake written into its Constitution, the matter seems to have been put to the side for now. Germany is in breach of the (now suspended) E.U. rules and doesn't seem concerned about it.

The bloc's top policymakers are saying now that the rules need to be changed for good, in what could become one of the most important revisions in a generation to mainstream Western liberal economic policy, with major implications for politics and society.

"The pandemic has left a legacy of significantly higher public and private debt levels. The need to rebuild fiscal buffers is clear," said Paolo Gentiloni, the top E.U. economic official, said on Wednesday. "But debt reduction strategies must be realistic if they are to ensure stability and support growth," he added, warning that the bloc could well be slipping into recession.

He said that the E.U. would begin to consider changes to its stringent fiscal rules that would soften them and make them more attuned to the economic cycle.

"It's time to move on, leaving behind the traditional divide," he said.

For left-leaning economists who have been protesting against austerity since the global financial crisis and the era of austerity it unleashed, this moment represents a pyrrhic ideological victory at best.

"It's actually tragic," said Frank van Lerven, a senior economist affiliated to the New Economics Foundation, a progressive think tank. "For the last ten years and more, we've been told that workers and pensioners and the young all have to make sacrifices and we need to live within our means. We've seen degrading infrastructure, our health system deteriorated. "

"It was all for nought," he concluded. "The dogma has been clearly exposed as a narrow political ideology, devoid of macroeconomic thinking, weaponized for narrow political ends."

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HEADLINE	09/08 DC: emergency over bussed migrants
SOURCE	https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2022/sep/8/dc-mayor-makes-emergency-office-receive-illegal-im/
GIST	D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser declared a public emergency Thursday over the surge of illegal immigrants arriving in the nation's capital, calling it "a crisis that is certainly not of our making" and tapping millions of dollars in aid to help house and feed the newcomers.

She said the money will go to creating an emergency office to receive the migrants as they arrive and help connect them with services.

The mayor said she will seek reimbursement from the federal government for the money. She blamed the Biden administration and border state governors for dumping the problem into her lap.

“We have no control on all that is coming towards the District, but we do have control on how we make sure that our values are present in all that we do,” Ms. Bowser said.

She said she was responding to some 9,400 migrants that Arizona and Texas have bused into the District of Columbia since April.

Her emergency declaration seemed to confirm the claims of Texas Gov. Greg Abbott and Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey that the current migrant surge is unprecedented and is straining localities in ways never before seen.

It also signaled that their busing plans have worked to spread the burden of new arrivals.

“In many ways, the governors of Texas and Arizona have turned us into a border town,” said Brianne Nadeau, a member of the D.C. Council who stood with Ms. Bowser at her announcement.

Though the number of illegal immigrants has dipped from all-time monthly highs this spring, border encounters are still running at a near-record pace. In July, Customs and Border Protection recorded nearly 200,000 encounters with unauthorized migrants.

Well more than half of them were quickly released into the country, overwhelming communities in border states.

In April, Mr. Abbott began busing them to the District and dropping them off at Union Station, just blocks from the U.S. Capitol. He said his goal was to give Washington politicians an up-close look at what his state is facing.

Mr. Abbott then put New York on his destination list and just weeks ago added Chicago.

Mr. Ducey began his own busing route after Mr. Abbott.

Ms. Bowser suggested that the states have “tricked or lied to” migrants to get them onto the buses, though she did not offer any evidence.

Those involved in Texas’ busing operation say migrants have been happy to board the buses, which deliver them closer to their final destinations.

On that, Ms. Bowser agreed. She said most of those arriving in the District will go on to other places.

The city currently counts 94 migrant families — 348 people in total — staying in hotels at a cost to the city government. She said roughly 70 migrant children have enrolled in D.C. public schools.

The mayor’s public emergency declaration lasts 15 days. She said it gives her some administrative powers to grapple with the situation.

“We’re not a border town. And so basically what we’re doing today is a new normal for us,” she said. “We have to have an infrastructure in place that allows us to deal with the border crisis that has visited us in Washington, D.C.”

She said the city will maintain an around-the-clock presence at Union Station to be ready to welcome any buses that arrive. The city is also searching for another site to house migrants.

	<p>Republicans said the mayor’s declaration is proof that the Biden administration has bungled the border situation.</p> <p>They highlighted D.C. officials’ use of the word “crisis” — a term the Biden administration has avoided — to describe the several thousand migrants they have received.</p> <p>“It only took 17 months,” the Republican National Committee said.</p> <p>Ms. Bowser has been pleading for months for assistance from the Biden administration. She has asked for money and for the president to authorize the use of the National Guard.</p> <p>She said she was “very disappointed” in Mr. Biden and the White House for not delivering.</p> <p>New York Mayor Eric Adams has also demanded federal assistance to deal with the migrants reaching his city.</p> <p>Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot has taken a different approach and said the busing gives her city a chance to live its welcoming values.</p> <p>She did find time to chide Mr. Abbott for the busing by saying, “This is not the Christianity and the teachings of the Bible that I know.”</p>
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HEADLINE	09/08 DHS: lenient welfare policy for migrants
SOURCE	https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2022/sep/8/dhs-adopts-lenient-policy-toward-immigrants-use-wel/
GIST	<p>Homeland Security on Thursday announced it has adopted a new lenient policy on immigrants’ use of welfare, tossing a Trump-era policy that would have been far stricter.</p> <p>Under the new system, known as the “public charge” rule, immigrants will only be penalized for potential welfare use if the government believes they will eventually become “primarily dependent” on government payments.</p> <p>By contrast, living in government housing, using Medicaid for health coverage or accepting food stamps wouldn’t count against an immigrant.</p> <p>Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said the new rule will deliver “fair and humane treatment of legal immigrants.”</p> <p>“Consistent with America’s bedrock values, we will not penalize individuals for choosing to access the health benefits and other supplemental government services available to them,” he said.</p> <p>But Emilio Gonzalez, who ran U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services in the Bush administration, said the new rule stretched the intent of the law.</p> <p>“These people are doing through policy changes what they know Congress won’t allow,” he said.</p> <p>The concept of the public charge rule is that immigrants should be able to pay their own way and not be a burden on Americans. A public charge policy has been in place dating back to the late 1800s.</p> <p>Illegal immigrants are not supposed to be eligible for any public benefits, though they can accept some benefits on behalf of their U.S. citizen children.</p>

The current public charge law was written by Congress in 1996. It allows the government to block entry — or to refuse to grant permanent legal status — to immigrants believed likely to depend on government assistance to support themselves here.

Congress left it to the administration to lay out exactly how that calculation would work. In 1999, the Clinton administration released “interim” guidance saying that only immigrants who directly took government cash payments, or became institutionalized, were in violation.

Few immigrants ran afoul of the rule.

In 2019, the Trump administration adopted a new policy expanding the programs that would be judged to include non-cash assistance like food stamps or public housing. That policy was halted by federal courts, but while it was in place it proved ineffective, Homeland Security said.

Of 47,555 applicants whose cases were ruled on during that time, only three were denied on “public charge” grounds. Another two were given notices of intent to deny. In all five cases, the applicants were later approved.

But officials said the rule did have dangerous side effects — in particular, immigrants who feared accessing programs even though they were eligible for them.

Survey data suggested that some immigrants declined to seek health care, even during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Mayorkas’ new policy returns largely to the one from the Clinton era.

The administration had released the rule in draft form earlier, and Thursday’s adoption was expected.

Having the policy set in formal regulations makes it much more difficult for a future administration to overturn.

They would have to go through the same rulemaking process that the Biden administration did and come up with compelling reasons why the Biden plan isn’t working, or doesn’t match the intent of the law.

Immigrant-rights advocates cheered the new rules, calling them critical components of a nation ready to welcome less well-off newcomers.

“The United States does best when it takes advantage of the talents of immigrants from all walks of life, not just the privileged,” said Jorge Loweree at the American Immigration Council. “The data is clear that immigrants are a net benefit to this country, even if they start from the bottom and work their way up.”

Still, the Migration Policy Institute said Thursday that fears in the immigrant community about using welfare will linger. MPI said a major public education campaign could overcome those fears.

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HEADLINE	09/08 Queen Elizabeth II visit to Seattle in 1983
SOURCE	https://www.king5.com/article/news/local/queen-elizabeth-1983-visit-seattle/281-511a759e-8ed3-407c-aa7f-3411473ce0e2
GIST	<p>SEATTLE — Queen Elizabeth II’s death sent a shockwave of mourning across the world as memories of royal tours and visits come to the minds of many, including a five-hour stop in Seattle in 1983.</p> <p>On March 7, 1983, Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip visited Seattle as the last stop of their 10-day Pacific Coast tour of the United States before heading off to Victoria and Vancouver, British Columbia.</p>

The Queen's first and only full-length Pacific Coast tour began in San Diego on Feb. 27, 1983, after an invitation from President Ronald Reagan.

On March 7, Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip landed at Boeing Field in Seattle and departed Air Force Two on a typical soggy March day. Washington state Governor John Spellman, Seattle Mayor Charles Royer and King County Executive Randy Revelle welcomed the Queen and Prince.

Former Seattle Mayor Charles Royer released a statement Thursday:

"Today I join with so many others around the world who are mourning the loss of Queen Elizabeth, who helped guide not just Britain but the world with dignity, calm and consummate grace over her historic seven-decade reign. My heartfelt condolences go out to her family and her country for their great loss. I remember with great fondness the Queen's visit to Seattle in 1983, during my second term as mayor. Her visit helped put Seattle on the global map. Her kindness and humor was impossible to miss, and she drew huge and adoring crowds here. Her visit furthered the bond between our two countries, and strengthened our trade and partnership with Great Britain. And something I'll never forget, she remarked that I looked like her son, Prince, now King, Charles!"

In Seattle, the Queen visited Children's Orthopedic Hospital and met with families. The Queen stopped by Seattle Center and rode the monorail before attending a private reception at the Westin Hotel.

The Queen also spoke at the University of Washington's Hec Edmundson Pavilion in front of 8,500 spectators.

"In the 10 days that we have been on the Pacific Coast, we have learnt the truth about the saying, that where the handshake is a little stronger, and where the smile dwells a little longer, that is where the West begins," the Queen said.

Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip departed Seattle on their royal yacht the Britainia and made way toward Victoria and Vancouver, British Columbia, ending the Queen's visit to Seattle.

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HEADLINE	09/08 Red flag warning for most of western WA
SOURCE	https://www.king5.com/article/weather/western-washington-fire-watch/281-f0ba5512-163a-4ad2-be58-7787512acac8
GIST	<p>WASHINGTON — Most of western Washington will be under a Red Flag Warning starting at noon on Friday. It will be lifted Saturday at midnight.</p> <p>The Cascades, Olympics and most lowland areas of western Washington will see hot, dry and windy conditions, according to the National Weather Service (NWS).</p> <p>A Red Flag Warning means that critical fire weather conditions are either imminent or occurring now. Any fires that develop will likely spread quickly and outdoor burning is not recommended.</p> <p>The Washington Department of Natural Resources tweeted that in addition to the "already critical fire weather conditions" there will also be increased wind from the east. This could result in "severe wildfire activity around the state."</p> <p>Temperatures are expected to be in the mid-80s on Friday and could get up to the low 90s in some areas on Saturday.</p> <p>A combination of moderate breezes, low relative humidity and warm temperatures can contribute to the spread of existing fires. If a fire were to begin, air quality may diminish in the surrounding area, according to NWS.</p> <p>The NWS offered tips on how stay safe during high fire risk:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't burn anything outdoors when it's hot, windy or when vegetation is dry. • Be sure no metal car parts drag on the ground and be careful not to park on dry grass. • Always keep a hose nearby when mowing a dry lawn. • When grilling, do not grill near dry vegetation and make sure that the charcoal used is cool to the touch before throwing it away. <p>In addition to the fire danger, smoke from existing fires in eastern Washington is expected to make its way across the state.</p> <p>The Puget Sound Clean Air Agency said they expect wildfire smoke to continue to spread Friday and into the weekend with levels that could be unhealthy for sensitive groups.</p>
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HEADLINE	09/08 Pushback on homeless shelter expansion
SOURCE	https://www.king5.com/article/news/local/homeless/international-district-new-homeless-shelter/281-bfc07b84-5efb-4b82-92e8-a99323429d4b
GIST	<p>SEATTLE — Community members in Seattle's Chinatown International District hosted an informational meeting about a homeless shelter expansion on Thursday at Hing Hay Park.</p> <p>Some are saying they were left out of conversations about a homeless shelter expansion in SODO, the International District and Pioneer Square.</p> <p>The county council approved the project back in May. The shelter will house nearly 500 people, and provide space for RV's and a sobering center. The enhanced shelter project costs around \$22 million to operate through a variety of funding sources.</p> <p>Community member Matt Chan spoke at the meeting and stressed that it was not an anti-homeless event.</p> <p>"It's not the unhoused that are causing the problem. It's a contributing factor to how the city is neglecting this neighborhood," he said.</p> <p>The neglect has been present for a long time, according to Chan.</p> <p>There are already 10 homeless shelters in the neighborhood. Add in the recent Sound Transit re-design plans that would displace five to nineteen businesses and take eleven years of construction.</p> <p>"The deep community engagement that's needed doesn't take place," Chan said.</p> <p>He said the city did not consult them about the potential shelter, they just told them it was going to happen.</p> <p>"The government is supposed to help people, not do things to people," Chan said. "They're deciding what's best for our community with cursory community engagement, and that's just dead wrong."</p> <p>Many members were able to speak at the Thursday meeting.</p> <p>"There are empty lots and empty buildings in white neighborhoods, and the fact that you do not schedule it is racist. Absolutely flat out racist," one said.</p> <p>If this shelter were to open up at the end of the year as planned, the community just wants accountability.</p> <p>"They need to provide the structure to keep this neighborhood safe," Chan said. "They need to clear the encampments. The people living in encampments in this area should have first priority to this shelter."</p>

	The shelter is proposed to be built by the end of the year.
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HEADLINE	09/08 Pierce Co. 'Wonderland' homeless camp
SOURCE	https://www.king5.com/article/news/local/homeless/pierce-county-parkland-encampment-trespassing/281-2dbe15ff-3d44-43e3-9454-6d605a6ac1bf
GIST	<p>PARKLAND, Wash. — Pierce County deputies were dispatched to Parkland Wednesday to clear out a homeless encampment on 149th Street.</p> <p>The Pierce County Sheriff's Department said 60 people in total were living there. Eight were arrested on outstanding warrants, and two were sent to the hospital for various medical conditions.</p> <p>Jeffery Brown, a resident of the self-titled Wonderland encampment, said he's experienced homelessness for two months, and when he first heard that he'd have to leave the encampment on 149th Street in Parkland, he didn't take it seriously.</p> <p>"A couple of weeks ago, they said they were going to come through and they were going to boot everyone out the next day or give us three-day notices," Brown said. "Nothing came of it, so for like three weeks, we thought it was just us them coming through and getting our numbers, and then this morning, we got a rude awakening."</p> <p>Wednesday morning, Pierce County deputies let the residents of Wonderland know that if they stay, they would be arrested for trespassing.</p> <p>The sheriff's department said it's working with the property owners to help clear out the debris that's left behind.</p> <p>Pierce County Councilmember Jani Hitchen said while encampments aren't new in Parkland, the size and position of the encampment was particularly troubling for residents.</p> <p>"We were getting a lot of concerned citizens that were just frustrated and upset that something wasn't being done," Hitchen said.</p> <p>The frustration led to calls for a sweep of the area.</p> <p>But Hitchen isn't convinced sweeps are the most effective approach.</p> <p>"The question I still have is: where do they go?" Hitchen asked. "If we continue to sweep without a planned destination, without a place for them to go, they just continue to splinter off into smaller and smaller groups, set up new encampments, and the process starts over."</p> <p>Hitchen also said the displaced residents are spread to neighborhoods throughout the county.</p> <p>"They end up in side streets and neighborhoods, they end up in smaller areas where they're more visible to individuals, and encroach on neighborhoods and communities, so you'll hear more from personal property owners as opposed to business owners," she said.</p> <p>Brown said he's already planned his next move and is working with the Tacoma Rescue Mission to get back on his feet after being homeless for two months.</p> <p>"I'm going to try to get in one of the programs and into a detox facility and maybe some shared living," he said.</p> <p>But Brown has also seen how the forced displacement has impacted some of his neighbors.</p>

“A lot of people here go to work every single day, and you wouldn’t even know, because they’re working right beside you,” Brown said. “A lot of people work fast food around here and now that they get displaced and now they have to commute to work. It could be ten minutes or twenty minutes, but that could disrupt their job.”

Brown now wants to see more resources made available in Parkland and that people recognize the humanity in those who live in Wonderland.

“I would just like people to see that homeless people are people too,” Brown said. “We’re not trash.”

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HEADLINE	09/08 WA only state nationwide striking teachers
SOURCE	https://www.kiro7.com/news/local/washington-state-has-only-striking-teachers-nationwide-educators-share-similar-concerns/GE2KZRX56VF3XMPFUQOAVA6DEU/
GIST	<p>Washington State is currently the only state in the country with teachers on strike right now. (Though teachers in Columbus, OH, did strike last month.)</p> <p>Educators in five school districts across western Washington voted to strike this year, including Seattle, Tumwater, Eatonville, Ridgefield, and Kent. Kent ended its strike after nine days, and students started school on Thursday. Teachers in Port Angeles voted to authorize a strike but reached an agreement with the district before the first day of school.</p> <p>Teachers share similar concerns across different districts.</p> <p>“1, 2, 3, 4 — we won’t take it anymore!” educators chanted outside Rising Star Elementary on Thursday, the third day of the strike for Seattle Education Association (SEA) members.</p> <p>“I have definitely experienced that burnout,” said Ibijoke Idowu, a special education teacher at Rising Star. The president of the Washington Education Association (WEA), who helps support the local unions, was in Seattle on Thursday at picket lines.</p> <p>“I think the workload has increased substantially. It increased through the pandemic,” said Larry Delaney, president of WEA.</p> <p>And he says the situation isn’t improving.</p> <p>“One of the consistencies we’ve seen throughout the state, whether in Port Angeles that reached an agreement, Kent, Seattle, Ridgefield — it’s about class size and case load, it’s about providing wraparound services that students need,” Delaney said.</p> <p>The problems have been exacerbated by the pandemic, and it is bringing a slight uptick in the number of districts with teachers striking this year.</p> <p>“We have about 280 some odd districts in the state. Every year we might have two or three (strikes) and this year we have five,” Delaney said. “To a certain extent, these are contagious. When we see one local organize and take action, others say, ‘well, we’ve got similar conditions here, similar concerns for our students, our community, our educators, maybe this is something we should take a look at too.’ It’s also a credit to the organizing we’ve done over the years here in Washington.”</p> <p>Eatonville teachers are on day two of their strike. Paraeducators in Tumwater are rallying Thursday night outside district headquarters demanding changes to “poverty wages.” They have voted to authorize a strike if an agreement isn’t reached by Sept. 11.</p>

Teachers in Ridgefield are ready to go on strike Friday but are going through another round of negotiations on Thursday evening.

The Kent School District reached [an agreement with KEA](#) after educators there went on strike for nine school days or nearly two weeks.

One sticking point for Seattle teachers is staffing for special education students and how they're taught. The school district is incorporating students with special needs into the general education classroom.

"Today, the way we segregate the students receiving special education services does not offer the best pathway," said Seattle Public Schools superintendent Brent Jones in a [video provided](#) by the school district. "Imagine schools where the most vulnerable learn beside their peers."

But special ed teachers believe how it's being done isn't right and they're picketing to be heard.

"Those special education cuts that are being made, they don't help the students," said Idowu, who has been teaching special education for seven years. "It doesn't help students if we don't have the staff needed to support them."

WEA says these themes – workloads, class sizes, advocating for teacher and student mental health — are areas where more teachers are pushing for change.

"I think that this is going to be more of the norm — not necessarily strikes, but these issues," Delaney said. An SEA spokesperson said there is good progress being made at the bargaining tables and a tentative contract agreement is "very close" as of Thursday afternoon.

Classes are canceled for Friday, and SPS families will find out by 3 p.m. Friday if classes will be able to start on Monday.

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HEADLINE	09/08 NOAA assists search downed floatplane
SOURCE	https://www.kiro7.com/news/local/noaa-assists-search-downed-floatplane-off-whidbey-body-recovered-victim-is-identified/QRXHPYNSVA2BOJPSKXIRWHD3M/
GIST	<p>A body that was recovered from last weekend's floatplane crash into the Puget Sound has been identified as 29-year-old Gabrielle Hanna, a Seattle attorney.</p> <p>Hanna was one of 10 people on board when the plane went down off Whidbey Island, but the others' bodies have not been recovered.</p> <p>On Thursday, search crews used very extensive technology to look for the wreckage. Yet only bits and pieces of the plane have been recovered thus far.</p> <p>On Thursday, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association crews joined in on the search for the wreckage as they used extensive sonar and tracking systems to find the downed plane.</p> <p>"NOAA survey vessels are well-equipped ships with hull-mounted sonars and tote sonars that are used exactly to find wreckage like this," said David Mearns, an oceanographer who specializes in deepwater search and recovery operations.</p> <p>While five days have passed since the crash, Mearns said it's highly unlikely that the airplane's wreckage has drifted because of the water's tide.</p> <p>"You would need really fast-moving, two-knot, three-knot, four-knot type of currents to really expect that plane to move away from where it crashed," Mearns said.</p>

Return to Top	<p>Once the wreckage is located, then comes the hard part, which Mearns said is delicately and respectfully removing the bodies.</p> <p>“That is the most sensitive work to be done and generally if you can have divers do that rather than robotic vehicles, that is preferred,” said Mearns.</p> <p>While crews continued to search the Puget Sound on Thursday, Gov. Jay Inslee paid his respects to the 10 people who died.</p> <p>“It is a tragedy that has affected everybody in the state of Washington to see such a loss of life in a beautiful place in a beautiful time,” the governor said.</p> <p>Once the aircraft is recovered, NTSB investigators said it could still take two years before a final report into the crash is published.</p> <p>Oceanographers told KIRO 7 that it is highly likely and almost a certainty that the plane will have to be removed from the water so that investigators can look for real-time clues to determine what happened.</p>
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HEADLINE	09/08 Issues behind more strikes local teachers?
SOURCE	https://komonews.com/news/local/is-post-pandemic-education-issues-leading-to-more-strikes-by-teachers
GIST	<p>SEATTLE, Wash. — More than 65,000 students in four school districts in Washington, landing in the middle of contract negotiations between teachers and their districts. A fifth district settled its strike after students missed 2 weeks of school and a sixth, averted a strike at the last minute. Are strikes against school districts a growing trend, as we emerge from the pandemic? A quick search of recent history shows 6 districts all on strike, in September 2018.</p> <p>But Seattle is the largest district in the state, so the strike it’s currently experiencing, forcing classes to be canceled for a third day, is garnering a lot of attention.</p> <p>“1, 2, 3, 4. We won't take it anymore,” chanted members of the Seattle Education Association, while picketing outside Rising Star Elementary School.</p> <p>Walking among them, is social worker Andrea Bergen. She tells me she comes from a criminal justice background, now working in the district about 6 years. She says manages a minimum of 35 cases at once. During the pandemic, she made house calls, to families, who can't afford to pay rent or other bills or buy food. These needs, she says existed before the pandemic and only grew during it.</p> <p>Bergen tells me that she's 1 of about 20 family support staff in a district, which has 106 schools.</p> <p>“And I think we forget that our little people have been taking all of this in and then they come to school, and I have no way to deal with it and our staff aren’t equipped to support that. And you know that makes for a very different atmosphere in the school building itself,” she said.</p> <p>Staffing, caseloads, higher salaries and support for both staff and students, all on the bargaining table, among other issues for teachers in Seattle and other districts.</p> <p>“And there were a lot of issues that have been put off over the last couple of years in bargaining,” said Larry Delaney, president of the Washington Education Association.</p> <p>Delaney tells me districts and educators just had to keep the system operational during the pandemic, but now local unions see the need for more, their membership voting to strike, without it. So, will this become a trend?</p> <p>“These are trending right now, but I don’t think the numbers are all that much higher than we would see in a typical year pre-pandemic,” said Delaney.</p>

	<p>But things do change.</p> <p>“We’ve seen people as a result of the pandemic reprioritize what’s important to them and education is no different.” Said Delaney.</p> <p>Many of the issues, being negotiated are similar throughout the districts.</p> <p>One of the most recent proposals being reviewed in in Seattle, is a union request that the district hand over investigations of bullying and harassment claims to a third party, entirely removing district involvement.</p>
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HEADLINE	09/08 NWS: parts WA worst air quality in world
SOURCE	https://www.krem.com/article/weather/severe-weather/parts-washington-worst-air-quality-world/293-7d068a4c-a621-4bd0-a683-d8514b17a2c7
GIST	<p>SPOKANE, Wash. — As of Thursday night, parts of Washington state have some of the worst air quality in the entire world. Chelan, Wenatchee and the Methow Valley reached hazardous criteria due to wildfire smoke in the region. Multiple large wildfires north of region are the primary source of the smoke.</p> <p>A breezy northerly wind funneled smoke from the Parks Fire burning along the United States and Canadian borders in the Cascades into the western Columbia Basin. The smoke was thick enough that the air quality index climbed to levels not currently able to be registered. The AQI of more than 500 means every person should stay indoors and limit exposure to unfiltered air.</p> <p>An AQI above 100 typically means those sensitive to drops in air quality should limit time outdoors. Above 200, all people should limit exposure and above 300, the air becomes dangerous to breathe for everyone.</p> <p>With an atmospheric trough building to the east, relief isn’t expected to make it in until Friday. Wind is expected to shift from northerly to easterly Friday afternoon and evening, helping to push the smoke into then over the Cascades. The timing of the pattern change means clean air likely won’t arrive until Saturday morning. With the easterly flow lasting through Saturday and calmer conditions on Sunday, air quality should improve through the weekend.</p>
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HEADLINE	09/08 WA committee renames state nature sites
SOURCE	https://www.q13fox.com/news/18-washington-nature-sites-renamed-to-remove-indigenous-slur-after-federal-order
GIST	<p>Several natural locations around Washington now go by new names, following an effort by the U.S. Department of the Interior to scrub Indigenous slurs from them.</p> <p>Specifically, the aim was to remove the word ‘squaw’—an ethnic and sexual slur historically used to refer to Indigenous women. The word is considered universally offensive by Native Americans and First Nation people, but is found in the names of hundreds of natural locations and geographic features around the U.S. and Canada.</p> <p>In 2021, Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland declared the term to be derogatory, and formally ordered it be removed from names of natural locations.</p> <p>Currently, the word has been scrubbed from 660 mountains, rivers, valleys, creeks and other sites.</p> <p>The Washington State Committee on Geographic Names has been working to remove such names for years, and recently received input from Indigenous tribes on new names.</p>

	<p>Renamed locations in Washington now include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laupp Canyon, Lincoln County • Gee Island, Clark County • South Tucannon Spring, Garfield County • Big Joes Creek, Clallam County • Condon Mountain, Okanogan County • Aalvic Wahtum, Skamania County • Pataniks Pushtye, Skamania County • Timla Wapykt, Skamania County • Wenaha Peak, Columbia County • Gooseberry Creek, Okanogan County • Gathering Creek, Jefferson County • Snqilt Creek, Stevens County • Sq'wanana, Klickitat County • Nosh Nosh Wahtum, Kittitas County • Swaram Creek Ridge, Chelan/Okanogan County • Galena Valley, Pend Oreille County • Kiya Lake, Pierce County • Wowpu-tushwa, Chelan County
Return to Top	For more information, visit the DNR's page for the Committee on Geographic Names . You can find the full list of name changes across the U.S. here .

HEADLINE	09/08 WA Covid state of emergency ends Oct 31
SOURCE	https://www.seattlepi.com/news/article/Washington-s-COVID-19-state-of-emergency-to-end-17428578.php
GIST	<p>OLYMPIA, Wash. (AP) — Washington Gov. Jay Inslee announced Thursday that the state of emergency sparked by the COVID-19 pandemic will end Oct. 31, nearly three years after the Democratic governor first issued the order.</p> <p>"I'm confident now that we have reached a significant milestone in the Covid effort," Inslee said at a news conference at the Capitol. "We are now in a position to be able to continue our efforts against Covid in multiple ways without the necessity of an emergency order."</p> <p>A vast majority of the 85 orders issued – including most mask requirements, restrictions on commerce and restaurants – had already been previously lifted. An additional 13 health care related orders are set to end Oct. 27, including one that offered flexibility for locations pharmacies could store vaccines. Ten remaining orders, including the underlying emergency order and vaccination requirements for health care and education workers, will remain in place until the emergency order is lifted Oct. 31.</p> <p>Inslee noted that employers can continue to require vaccination as a condition of employment if they choose, and Inslee had previously announced such requirements would remain an employment requirement for most state agencies.</p> <p>Masking requirements will remain in place at health care and long-term care settings after the state of emergency ends, under an order that was updated by the state Department of Health last month. That order also will continue to require masking at Correctional and jail facilities when the county in which the facility is located has a medium or high level of COVID-19 transmission.</p> <p>Inslee also said he is looking at options to ensure there are protections for workers who choose to wear a mask in their workplace.</p> <p>Inslee issued the state of emergency Feb. 29, 2020, after cases started to climb and a death in the state was the first reported COVID-10 death in the U.S. Washington is one of just a handful of states, including California and Texas, to still have active orders in place. Last month, North Carolina's governor signed an order ending the state of emergency there.</p>

Republicans, the minority party in both the state House and Senate, had decried the length of time Inslee held on to the broad powers provided under state law, and pushed this year to limit the amount of time a declaration could stay in place without legislative approval. A Senate measure, sponsored by a Democrat, was introduced during the 60-day legislative session earlier this year and would have authorized legislative leaders to terminate an emergency after 90 days if the Legislature is not in session. Republicans argued it was a watered-down bill that wouldn't have done anything and it died in the House.

House Republican Leader J.T. Wilcox said that while he was glad to see the governor's announcement, "it should have happened a long time ago."

"What I hope can happen now is, can the Legislature look at emergency powers reform in a less politicized way and proceed in a way that will strengthen the legislative branch in future emergencies," he said.

There have been more than 14,100 deaths in the state since the start of the pandemic, and nearly 1.8 million cases of COVID-19 as of this week.

More than 76% of the Washington population age 6 months and older has received at least one dose of vaccine, and nearly 70% is fully vaccinated. About 58% of those age 5 and older who are eligible for boosters have received one, according to the Department of Health.

Cases and hospitalizations have declined significantly since a major omicron-fueled peak in January. But health officials are still urging people to get the new COVID-19 booster that was recently endorsed by the CDC. The new booster is a bivalent vaccine, with half the original vaccine and half protection against the BA.4 and BA.5 omicron versions now causing nearly all COVID-19 infections.

Inslee said that he and his wife, Trudi, both received the new booster Thursday afternoon.

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HEADLINE	09/08 Seattle: 3 finalists for police chief
SOURCE	https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/politics/city-of-seattle-announces-three-finalists-for-police-chief/
GIST	<p>Three finalists, including two internal candidates, have been named in Seattle's search for a permanent police chief, which should conclude this fall, more than two years after the former chief resigned.</p> <p>Since former Chief Carmen Best retired from the position in 2020 after a contentious summer of protests and criticism of the department, interim Chief Adrian Diaz has served as a temporary replacement.</p> <p>Now, Diaz, Seattle Assistant Chief of Police Eric Greening and Tucson, Arizona, Assistant Chief of Police Kevin Hall have been selected as finalists out of 15 candidates presented to a search committee by a firm contracted this spring to conduct a nationwide search.</p> <p>"Our search committee and assessors have advanced candidates with our community's expectations at the forefront — accountability, community-centered leadership, and innovation. I look forward to meeting with and evaluating these candidates," Mayor Bruce Harrell said in a news release Thursday.</p> <p>According to the mayor's office, the three finalists have been vetted and unanimously selected by four public safety assessors and presented to Harrell to select an appointee, as is required by the city's charter. The City Council will have to confirm Harrell's selection.</p> <p>The finalists will participate in a publicly broadcast Q&A on Sept. 15, at a time to be determined. Between now and then, they will participate in a "series of stakeholder interviews" according to the mayor's office.</p> <p>While Harrell has repeatedly praised Diaz and publicly encouraged him to apply for the position at the start of the search, the charter requires a competitive hiring process, including three finalists.</p>

Harrell said this summer that his selection will be largely based on community input gathered through a survey and a series of public meetings.

Adrian Diaz

Diaz, who was originally hired in 1997, was promoted to deputy chief in 2020, after serving as an assistant chief in charge of the department's Collaborative Policing Bureau. He [assumed the interim position in 2020](#).

He has also worked in the department's patrol and investigations units, among other assignments.

According to the mayor's office, Diaz has completed training from the FBI's National Executive Institute, the Major Cities Chiefs Associations Police Executive Leadership Institute, the Cascade Executive Program and the Senior Management Institute of Policing.

Eric Greening

Greening has been at SPD for 28 years and has served as the assistant chief of the Collaborative Policing Bureau since 2021.

He has worked in the department's patrol, traffic and DUI, and narcotics units, among other assignments, and was promoted to captain in 2015, before becoming an assistant chief in 2017.

Greening has completed training through the Police Executive Research Forum's Senior Management Institute for Police and the Senior Executives in State and Local Government course at the Harvard University Kennedy School of Government Executive Education. He is also Senior Certified Professional credentialed by the Society for Human Resource Management and holds a diversity, equity and inclusion certificate from Cornell University, according to the release.

Kevin Hall

The lone external finalist, Hall has been at the Tucson Police Department for 30 years, previously working as a patrol officer, detective, patrol sergeant, SWAT sergeant, investigative sergeant, patrol lieutenant, Field Services Bureau Executive Officer and patrol captain.

He has worked in the department's Gang, Physical Child Abuse, Internal Affairs, Homicide, and Home Invasion/Kidnapping units and [implemented the department's pre-arrest deflection program](#) for nonviolent charges associated with substance misuse in 2018.

Hall has completed training through the Harvard Kennedy School of Government Senior Executives in State & Local Government, the Police Executive Research Forum Senior Management Institute for Police, the Northwestern University Center for Public Safety's School of Police Staff and Command, the University of Arizona Eller School of Management Southwest Leadership program, and the Foundations of Public Sector Leadership program, according to the release.

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HEADLINE	09/08 Seattle-area home prices trend down
SOURCE	https://www.seattletimes.com/business/real-estate/seattle-area-home-continue-to-trend-down-see-whats-happening-near-you/
GIST	<p>It's not just the Craftsman down the block dropping in price. Home prices across the Puget Sound area continue to trend down.</p> <p>That includes some of the priciest homes on the market. A waterfront home in Hunts Point on the Eastside that was listed for \$21.5 million in July is now \$18.9 million. An expansive mansion at an undisclosed address on Lake Washington dipped from \$32.5 million to just under \$30 million. And an estate in a secluded Madison Park enclave priced at \$35 million in May could now be yours for just \$29 million.</p>

Price drops spanning all levels of homes are yet another sign of the region's cooling real estate market, according to new data released Thursday by the Northwest Multiple Listing Service.

The number of pending home sales in King County in August was down about 27% year over year, according to the listing service. Home prices are still up compared to this time a year ago, but continue to fall from their peak this spring.

The median single-family home sold for \$899,999 in King County, \$749,999 in Snohomish County, \$555,000 in Pierce County and \$550,000 in Kitsap County.

King County prices were up 5.9% from last August, but down 9.9% since May of this year. During the same period last year, prices dipped 2.3%.

Condo buyers and sellers are encountering a similar market. The median-price King County condo sold for \$485,000 in August, up 5.9% from last year but down 8.6% from the spring. During the same span last year, prices were flat.

The figures underscore that the latest trend is more than a typical fall slowdown, as rising mortgage rates and economic concerns keep homebuyers on the sidelines.

Similar slowdowns are playing out all over the country. Nationally, the average home sold for slightly less than its list price last month, according to [Redfin](#).

Windermere Chief Economist Matthew Gardner called the local figures "eye-opening," but argued "they are simply indicating the market is trending back to the more normalized conditions that we were seeing before the pandemic." Gardner said in a statement he expects prices to continue to drop this fall.

Homeowners needing to move or hoping to cash in on their current property are squeezed.

"A lot of sellers I've had on market for a couple months have started to pull their listings," said Redfin agent David Palmer. They're opting to stay in the houses for now or rent them out, he said.

Sellers whose properties are languishing may drop their prices. And those just hitting the market "are more conservative" in their pricing, Palmer said.

On the flip side, buyers are finding less severe competition.

Buyers are securing deals with protections that have become uncommon in recent years, like the ability to sell their previous house first.

"It's not going to happen on every property, but it's a definite possibility if the home has been on market longer than 30 days," Palmer said.

Still, plenty of people are staying put. In King County, sellers and buyers struck 27% fewer deals for single-family homes in August compared to the same month last year. Elsewhere in the Puget Sound region, pending sales dropped between 18% and 23% year over year.

Keller Williams agent Nicole Dankworth described the trend as "a stalemate market."

Buyers are holding off to see if the market will cool even further, while sellers are hesitant to let go of their homes for less than the prices they saw a few months ago, Dankworth said. "I've never really seen anything like this."

Dankworth worked with one recent buyer who secured a Craftsman home in West Seattle for \$185,000 under its list price. She listed an updated four-bedroom in Kenmore for \$1.35 million in June that sold for \$1.2 million last month.

	<p>Those trends extend to the luxury market, too, she said.</p> <p>Dankworth suspects luxury buyers hit by downturns in the stock market are “not making any big moves right now.”</p> <p>Meanwhile, luxury sellers who have been reluctant to drop their prices are finally ready to go for a huge reduction or accept a low offer, according to Dankworth.</p> <p>Even so, the region remains a seller’s market, according to the listing service. It would take about six to seven weeks to sell all the homes for sale in the Puget Sound region at current demand, according to a measure known as months of inventory.</p> <p>That’s better news for buyers compared to this spring, when it would have taken three weeks or less, but still short of the four to six months the industry considers a balanced market.</p>
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HEADLINE	09/08 WA job market softens, fewer options?
SOURCE	https://www.seattletimes.com/business/as-washingtons-job-market-softens-workers-may-have-fewer-options/
GIST	<p>Amid new signs of a cooling job market, the bargaining power many workers have wielded over desperate employers during the pandemic could be at a tipping point.</p> <p>Job postings for some of the state’s biggest employers have declined in recent months in part as some companies rein in expansion over fears of inflation and the recession risks of the government’s anti-inflation strategy.</p> <p>Boeing, which was on a hiring tear this spring, posted 6,250 openings during the May-August period, or less than a quarter of the number it posted from February-May, according to data reported Thursday by the state Employment Security Department.</p> <p>Even Amazon, which ballooned in size during the pandemic, saw its four-month postings fall by almost a third between July and August.</p> <p>“I don’t think that you’ll see us hiring at the same rates that we did,” CEO Andrew Jassy acknowledged at a conference Wednesday, according to The Wall Street Journal. In July, the Seattle-based online retail and cloud computing giant reported a \$2 billion loss largely attributable to its investments in electric vehicle maker Rivian.</p> <p>Across all employers in Washington, total monthly job postings dipped by 5.1% between June and July, the first decline since January, according to a separate labor supply and demand report posted by ESD on Wednesday. (August supply-demand data isn’t yet available.) Food service openings fell 6.2%. Construction openings fell nearly 17%.</p> <p>Hiring hasn’t stopped, by any means. Washington employers added 6,600 jobs in July. But the additions are declining: July’s increase, while up from June, was still only around two-thirds the average monthly increase over the preceding six months.</p> <p>“One month doesn’t make a pattern ... but it does look as a whole as though there’s a little bit of slowing down,” said Anneliese Vance-Sherman, an ESD regional economist who covers the Seattle area.</p> <p>If that slowdown continues and the unemployment rate, now at a very low 3.7%, rises, job seekers may find they’ve “got less leverage,” Vance-Sherman said. “If you’re offered a job ... you’re less likely to be in a position to negotiate for your ideal work setting.”</p>

Some recruiters say they are already seeing signs of that power shift, especially in hiring by larger employers.

Although the job market “is still employee driven,” the balance has shifted slightly in some sectors and company types, said Megan Slabinski, who oversees regional hiring for technology, marketing and creative roles with the Seattle office of recruiter Robert Half.

Employers “still have to be competitive from a salary standpoint, but you might not have to go the ludicrous” — by offering candidates extras such as big signing bonuses or stock options, she said. And where qualified candidates might have once counted “three or four offers, now they have two,” she said.

That’s creating opportunities for employers that struggled to hire when the market was so tight. As some larger firms rein in hiring, smaller and midsize firms aren’t getting outbid for talent quite as often, Slabinski said.

Likewise for firms outside of the high-spending tech sector.

Insurance companies, health care companies, retailers and others offering benefits and pay that can’t compete with tech are increasingly able “to find the talent that they need,” she said.

Other observers say it’s too soon to pronounce the end of the worker’s job market.

Washington’s job market still has triple the number of unfilled jobs it did pre-COVID-19, said Jacob Vigdor, an economist with the University of Washington Evans School of Public Policy who follows state and local job markets.

The biggest constraint on hiring isn’t employer uncertainty, but “the lack of available workers, in virtually every industry and in every corner of the state,” Vigdor said.

“If employers are maybe posting slightly fewer positions than a month or two ago, it might be because they are just giving up, or because they’ve anticipated the seasonal slowdown that comes at the end of summer,” Vigdor said.

“All that looks like to me is a historically incredible labor shortage easing just a bit,” Vigdor said. “It’s still a great time to be looking for work in Washington state.”

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HEADLINE	09/08 Names of places change from racist term
SOURCE	https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/u-s-changes-names-of-places-with-racist-term-for-native-women/
GIST	<p>CHEYENNE, Wyo. (AP) — The U.S. government has joined a ski resort and others that have quit using a racist term for a Native American woman by renaming hundreds of peaks, lakes, streams and other geographical features on federal lands in the West and elsewhere.</p> <p>New names for nearly 650 places bearing the offensive word “squaw” include the mundane (Echo Peak, Texas), peculiar (No Name Island, Maine) and Indigenous terms (Nammi’I Naokwaide, Idaho) whose meaning at a glance will elude those unfamiliar with Native languages.</p> <p>Nammi’I Naokwaide, located in traditional lands of the Shoshone and Bannock tribes in southern Idaho, means “Young Sister Creek.” The tribes proposed the new name.</p> <p>“I feel a deep obligation to use my platform to ensure that our public lands and waters are accessible and welcoming. That starts with removing racist and derogatory names that have graced federal locations for far too long,” Interior Secretary Deb Haaland said in a statement.</p>

The changes announced Thursday capped an almost yearlong process that began after Haaland, the first Native American to lead a Cabinet agency, took office in 2021. Haaland is from Laguna Pueblo in New Mexico.

The Native American Rights Fund, a nonprofit legal organization, welcomed the changes.

“Federal lands should be welcoming spaces for all citizens,” deputy director Matthew Campbell said in a statement. “It is well past time for derogatory names to be removed and tribes to be included in the conversation.”

Haaland in November declared the term derogatory and ordered members of the Board on Geographic Names, the Interior Department panel that oversees uniform naming of places in the U.S., and others to come up with alternatives.

Haaland meanwhile created a panel that will take suggestions from the public on changing other places named with derogatory terms.

Other places renamed include Colorado’s Mestaa’êhehe (pronounced “mess-taw-HAY”) Pass near Mestaa’êhehe Mountain about 30 miles (48 kilometers) west of Denver. The new name honors an influential translator, Owl Woman, who mediated between Native Americans and white traders and soldiers in what is now southern Colorado.

The Board on Geographic Names approved changing the mountain’s name in December.

While the offensive term in question, identified as “sq___” by the Interior Department on Thursday, has met wide scorn in the U.S. only somewhat recently, changing place names in response to broadening opposition to racism has long precedent.

The department ordered the renaming of places carrying a derogatory term for Black people in 1962 and those with a derogatory term for Japanese people in 1974.

The private sector in some cases has taken the lead in changing the offensive term for Native women. Last year, a California ski resort changed its name to Palisades Tahoe.

A Maine ski area also committed in 2021 to changing its name, two decades after that state removed the slur from names of communities and landmarks, though it has yet to do so.

The term originated in the Algonquin language and may have once simply meant “woman.” But over time, the word morphed into a misogynist and racist term to disparage Indigenous women, experts say.

California, meanwhile, has taken its own steps to remove the word from place names. The state Legislature in August passed a bill that would remove the word from more than 100 places beginning in 2025.

Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom has until the end of September to decide whether to sign the bill into law.

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HEADLINE	09/08 Audits: Oregon likely misspent relief funds
SOURCE	https://www.seattletimes.com/nation-world/nation-politics/oregon-likely-misspent-coronavirus-relief-funds-state-auditors-find/
GIST	Oregon potentially spent more than \$10 million in federal money on impermissible expenses and failed to accurately report data related to several federally funded social services programs during the 2021 fiscal year, state auditors said this week.

Auditors from the Oregon Secretary of State's Office identified \$4.8 million that was spent in violation of federal rules and another \$5.2 million that might have also been misspent based on a random sample of expenditures for 18 federal programs, according to the annual [Statewide Single Audit](#) released in July and a [summary of the audit results](#) released this week.

The federal government uses the findings of Oregon's annual statewide single audit to ensure compliance with program requirements, determine whether any money used for impermissible expenses must be repaid and decide if any sanctions should be imposed.

Roughly 85% of the questionable spending occurred when the Oregon Health Authority and Department of Administrative Services potentially misused Coronavirus Relief Funds allocated by the federal government, the reports said. Auditors found that the health authority provided grants to over 400 government and non-government organizations, but did not conduct timely or adequate monitoring of those recipients to ensure compliance with federal regulations or verify that grantees weren't leaving money unspent.

The Oregon Health Authority agreed with the findings and promised that unspent funds would be returned to the U.S. Department of Treasury.

Auditors also determined that there weren't adequate safeguards in place to ensure that two programs administered by the state – Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and Low-Income Home Energy Assistance – complied with federal guidelines.

The Department of Human Services remained out of compliance with federal requirements related to the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program for a fourth consecutive year, auditors found. The program provides cash assistance and services to help low-income families with children become self-sufficient.

Auditors found multiple problems with the reports that the department submitted to the federal government. The department improperly excluded several hundred cases a month that should have been included, included thousands of cases a month that shouldn't have been included and, in one month, only reported 44% of the child welfare cases they were supposed to report, auditors said.

They also found that the department failed to verify household income before providing the benefits, increasing the risk of providing benefits to ineligible individuals.

The faulty reports and the issues with income verification appeared to be a product of the state's transition in 2021 to the Oregon Eligibility system, an integrated application for medical, food, cash and child care assistance. The Oregonian/OregonLive [reported last month](#) on another problem – erroneous denials of long-term care benefits to low-income people in dire need – created by the Oregon Eligibility program's faulty operations.

In response to auditors' findings, the Department of Human Services said it would develop a workgroup with policy and business analysts, staff members who worked with the agency's previous technology system and staff from Deloitte, the lead developer for the Oregon Eligibility system, to ensure that the system, known as ONE, produces accurate data and reports. They said they would also update policies to ensure the income verification process is correctly implemented.

Auditors also identified significant deficiencies with other programs now administered through the ONE system, which was deployed statewide in February 2021.

They found that the department failed to verify the accuracy of the ONE system's calculations and eligibility determinations after the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program was integrated into the system. They found that staff occasionally overrode the determinations that the ONE program made regarding family food assistance, which they said could indicate errors in the system's calculations.

	<p>Auditors found that the department ultimately overstated its SNAP federal revenue and expenditures by approximately \$2.9 million during fiscal year 2021, a mistake that they said likely occurred due to the transition to the ONE system.</p> <p>Auditors also found that Oregon Housing and Community Services was out of compliance with federal guidelines because it failed to submit reports on grantees who received funding through the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program. The agency agreed with the finding and said it would hire additional staff to ensure that it is adhering to reporting requirements.</p>
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HEADLINE	09/08 Forest Service restarts burns of forest fuel
SOURCE	https://www.seattletimes.com/nation-world/nation/us-resumes-prescribed-fires-at-national-forests-after-review/
GIST	<p>SANTA FE, N.M. (AP) — The U.S. Forest Service is resuming its practice of intentionally lighting fires to clear brush and small trees from forested areas nationwide after a three-month hiatus to review the risks of runaway wildfires under increasingly severe climate conditions, the agency announced Thursday.</p> <p>The prescribed fire program was put on hold in late May in the midst of a devastating wildfire sparked by the federal government near Las Vegas, New Mexico. The flames burned across more than 500 square miles (1,300 square kilometers) through remote communities in the southern reaches of the Rocky Mountains.</p> <p>Forest Service Chief Randy Moore said prescribed burns will require new safeguards such as same-day authorization to keep pace with evolving weather and ground conditions.</p> <p>He said the Forest Service will adopt mandatory tactics, taken from an in-depth review and public consultation process, that include a more robust scientific analysis of burn plans and a final on-site evaluation of the potential for human error linked to fatigue or inexperience.</p> <p>Permission to light fires and other communications will be standardized to avoid missteps, amid efforts to learn from the small share of prescribed fires that escape control.</p> <p>“It’s our due diligence and I can’t overstate that,” Moore told The Associated Press. “Every time one of these fires happened, like the one down in New Mexico, you know, we lose trust and credibility in the communities that we serve and so we have to do this right.”</p> <p>Moore said the agency won’t back away from intentional burns that he sees as a crucial tool in reducing the buildup of combustible material on forest floors and grasslands.</p> <p>“Our climate is changing and we have the science to back that up,” Moore said. “We need to increase the amount of work that we’re doing by up to four times. We do feel that if we want to make a difference on that landscape, between forest thinning and prescribed burning, we really need to ramp it up. And we need to do it in a way that is safe, in a way that really instills public trust.”</p> <p>By the end of the year, the agency also wants to expand training not only for Forest Service staff but also community members who could be certified to participate directly in controlled wildfires.</p> <p>To instill greater accountability, Moore said he will soon designate a specific Forest Service member at the national level to oversee implementation of the new requirements and tactics for prescribed burning.</p> <p>Many forestry experts outside the federal government say prescribed burns need to be accompanied by sufficient oversight and new scientific tools for modeling of fire behavior.</p>

Owen Burney, director of the John T. Harrington Forestry Research Center at New Mexico State University, said the Forest Service could instill greater trust in prescribed burns with independent oversight from outside the agency — not just Forest Service administrators.

“I don’t think the Forest Service should be self-serving,” Harrington said. “What they need to have is external advisers.”

Jennifer Carbajal, who lived in Las Vegas as the government-sparked wildfire skirted the city, said she no longer considers prescribed burns viable after seeing people left homeless by the fire and the debris-choked flooding afterward.

“Everything needs to be reevaluated in light of the climate. Everything is getting exponentially worse,” she said. “I don’t think burning — prescribed burns — should be a tool in the kit anymore.”

The Forest Service typically ignites 4,500 prescribed fires a year, aimed at treating more than 2,000 square miles (5,200 square kilometers) across the National Forest system. Very few of the fires escape control — a fraction of 1% by Forest Service calculations.

Anticipated changes to the prescribe burn program also will be geared toward economic development and the possible introduction of new composite building products made from small diameter trees and wood particles, products that might incentivize better forest management and create local jobs.

Las Vegas resident Elmo Baca, a movie theater owner and chairman of a community foundation overseeing wildfire relief funds, said people with a lifetime of knowledge about local forests and weather conditions feel left out of decisions on prescribed burns.

“I would hope that going forward that the Forest Service would be more sensitive and cognizant of local people and their knowledge of the land,” he said. “I like the idea of them training people outside of the Forest Service.”

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HEADLINE	09/08 Mortgage rates highest level since 2008
SOURCE	https://www.nbcnews.com/business/economy/mortgage-rates-just-hit-highest-level-since-2008-rcna46854
GIST	<p>The average 30-year mortgage rate climbed to 5.89%, the highest level since 2008, according to new data published Thursday by Freddie Mac.</p> <p>Mortgage rates briefly declined for a period this summer even as the Federal Reserve raised the key interest rate to fight inflation. Markets have been closely watching the Fed's moves since the interest rate hikes began in March.</p> <p>"Rates are reacting to Federal Reserve Chair Jay Powell's comments following last week's jobs report in which he reiterated his unwavering focus on bringing inflation down to its 2% target level," Lisa Sturtevant, the chief economist at Bright MLS, a real estate data firm, said in an email.</p> <p>In remarks Thursday morning, Powell signaled the Fed intends to keep rates higher for longer.</p> <p>"History cautions strongly against prematurely loosening policy," he said in a Q&A presented by the Cato Institute, a libertarian think tank based in Washington, D.C, according to CNBC. "I can assure you that my colleagues and I are strongly committed to this project and we will keep at it until the job is done."</p> <p>Mortgage rates tend to track U.S. government bond yields. This week, the yield on the 10-year Treasury note jumped as high as 3.35%, itself the highest level in more than a decade.</p> <p>The higher mortgage rates are already weighing on home prices. For the first time in nearly 18 months, the average U.S. home sold below its asking price, according to housing group Redfin. The median home sale</p>

	<p>price was \$370,000, up by 6% year over year but 6% below the record high of \$393,725 during the four weeks that ended June 19, Redfin said.</p> <p>Even as mortgage rates tick higher, home shoppers should be able to easily find rates lower than the average, Freddie Mac said.</p> <p>"Borrowers can meaningfully benefit from shopping around for a better rate," it said. "Our research indicates that borrowers could save an average of \$1,500 over the life of a loan by getting one additional rate quote and an average of about \$3,000 if they get five quotes."</p>
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HEADLINE	09/09 Chicago buses bussed migrants to suburbs
SOURCE	https://www.foxnews.com/us/migrants-bussed-sanctuary-city-chicago-promptly-shipped-off-suburbs
GIST	<p>A group of over 100 migrants from the southern border were moved to an Illinois suburb after being welcomed in Chicago – an action that is reportedly frustrating local officials.</p> <p>The migrants are staying at a Hampton Inn in Burr Ridge and a Holiday Inn in Countryside, according to reporting by WGN-TV. An estimated 300 migrants have been bused from Texas to Chicago in the past two weeks.</p> <p>While Chicago is a sanctuary city and Cook County is a sanctuary county, the migrants at the Burr Ridge Hampton Inn are in DuPage County. The county's sanctuary status is unclear. However, Burr Ridge Republican Mayor Garry Grasso previously said he would work to secure the border and "defund sanctuary cities," according to WGN-TV.</p> <p>Now, Grasso said he is "frustrated" by the sudden influx of migrants.</p> <p>"I'm the mayor of the village, I should have been told. I'm as frustrated as Mayor Lightfoot was in her not being told," Mayor Gary Grasso said. "I'm frustrated but we're dealing with the situation and I'm going to keep my residents and my businesses apprised."</p> <p>Grasso referenced Mayor Lightfoot previously lashing out at Governor Abbott for the transportation of migrants, calling it "unacceptable" at a press conference this week.</p> <p>"My frustration comes from the actions of the governor of Texas," the Chicago mayor said. "There could be a level of coordination and cooperation, but he chooses to do none of those things. Instead, he chooses to send human beings across the country to an uncertain destination."</p> <p>"He is manufacturing a human crisis and it makes no sense to me," Lightfoot added. Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker made similar comments, accusing Abbott of treating migrants "like cattle."</p> <p>Abbott shot back at Lightfoot's comments, accusing her of deflecting the blame to him instead of President Biden.</p> <p>"[Biden's] inaction at our border is putting the lives of Texans at risk & is overwhelming our communities," the Texas governor in a tweet. "Texas is doing Biden's job to secure the border."</p>
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HEADLINE	09/08 Calif. contends w/scorching heat, wildfires
SOURCE	https://www.cbsnews.com/news/california-scorching-heat-wave-wildfires/
GIST	<p>Forces were beginning to collide in California on Thursday as wildfires threatened communities, an epic heat wave stressed the electrical grid and as moisture from a tropical storm was expected to bring thunderstorms and floods along with cooling.</p>

Firefighters struggled to control major wildfires in Southern California and the Sierra Nevada that have grown explosively, forced extensive evacuations and produced smoke that could interfere with solar power production.

The Fairview Fire in Southern California covered about 30 square miles of Riverside County and was just 5% contained. Two people died while fleeing flames on Monday and at least seven structures have been destroyed.

In the Sierra, the Mosquito Fire burned out of control, scorching at least 11 square miles, forcing evacuations for some 2,500 residents in Placer and El Dorado counties, while blanketing the region in smoke.

Flames jumped the American River, burning structures in the mountain hamlet of Volcanoville and moving closer to the town of Foresthill, home to about 1,500 people. Fire spokesperson Chris Vestal called the fast-moving blaze an "extreme and critical fire threat."

The Nevada Division of Environmental Protection warned the Reno area that air quality could be very unhealthy to hazardous due to smoke from the Mosquito Fire 100 miles away.

The fire's cause remained under investigation. Pacific Gas & Electric notified the state Public Utilities Commission that the U.S. Forest Service placed caution tape around the base of a PG&E transmission pole but that no damage could be seen. PG&E said unspecified "electrical activity" occurred close in time to the report of the fire on Sept. 6.

Another dangerous blaze burned in stands of timber near the Big Bear Lake resort region in the San Bernardino Mountains east of Los Angeles. It was just 2% contained after scorching nearly 2 square miles.

A surge of clouds and showers associated with Tropical Storm Kay off Mexico's Baja California peninsula knocked the edge off temperatures in Southern California at times but also were a potential problem for solar generation. The storm was downgraded from a hurricane Thursday evening.

Despite the initial impacts of Kay, forecasters warned that the heat was not yet done.

"The seemingly endless heat wave that has been plaguing California will finally becoming to an end across at least Southern California, but not before two more very hot days and very warm nights," the Los Angeles-area weather office wrote.

Operators of California's power grid issued another "Flex Alert" call for voluntary cuts in use of electricity and expanded the period by two hours, 3 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Wildfire smoke and the cloud cover created uncertainty about solar power production in afternoon hours when temperatures rise toward their peaks, said Elliot Mainzer, president and CEO of the California Independent System Operator.

There was also uncertainty about wind power at the back end of the period.

Cal-ISO has issued Flex Alerts since last week and has avoided ordering rolling power outages, although a miscommunication with one Northern California provider led to blackouts.

With record demand on power supplies across the West, California snapped its record energy use around 5 p.m. Tuesday with 52,061 megawatts, far above the previous high of 50,270 megawatts set July 24, 2006.

An emergency appeal for conservation that was sent to Californians' cellphones was credited with an immediate drop in demand on the electrical grid that evening.

Electrical demand hit 50,184 megawatts on Wednesday but it ended up being "a relatively quiet operation on the system," Mainzer told a briefing.

The electrical load forecast for Thursday afternoon and evening was higher, however, and the uncertainty involving the renewable energy sources made the situation a bit more complex, he said.

"We certainly think we're close to turning the corner, but we still have challenges ahead of us this evening," Mainzer said.

Storm and wind conditions associated with the approaching hurricane were likely to create a new set of risks for power shortages in Southern California, he noted.

Tropical Storm Kay was expected to reach northern Baja California on Friday, the National Weather Service said. Despite losing hurricane strength, Kay was expected to send a surge of moisture into Southern California. Strong winds, heavy rain and flash floods were likely Friday evening through Saturday. Tropical storm warnings were posted for mariners.

Up the West Coast, forecasters predicted strong, gusting winds and low humidity across western Oregon beginning Friday' and authorities warned of heightened wildfire danger after an unseasonably hot and dry late summer.

An Oregon utility said it will cut power to about 12,500 customers to the south and west of Portland just after midnight Friday in anticipation of strong, dry winds that pose a severe wildfire danger in the region. Another utility says about 30,000 additional customers could see their power cut as well in a bid to prevent fire from sagging or broken power lines.

Towns and cities across western Oregon and southwest Washington also imposed fire bans, including in the town of Seaside, where even beach bonfires were prohibited.

Forecasters warned of a chance of "rapid fire spread" but said winds were not expected to be as intense as those that hit on Labor Day weekend in 2020, fanning wildfires that burned more than 1 million acres, destroyed 4,000 homes and killed at least 11 people.

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HEADLINE	09/08 Monkeypox death: 2 nd person in US
SOURCE	https://www.cbsnews.com/news/monkeypox-second-person-in-the-u-s-dies-after-contracting-disease/
GIST	<p>Health authorities are now investigating what role monkeypox may have played in the death of a person diagnosed with the virus, officials in California said Thursday. This is the second known person to die in the U.S. after contracting the virus during the current outbreak.</p> <p>The announcement comes less than a month after officials in Texas confirmed they were investigating a potential death from the virus.</p> <p>California has tallied 4,140 monkeypox cases, more than any other state in the country.</p> <p>"We will be doing an autopsy. So it does take time for those results to come back. So it may be as soon as a few days, or it may take a few weeks," Los Angeles County's Dr. Rita Singhal told reporters on Thursday.</p> <p>The autopsy is scheduled to begin on Friday, a county spokesperson later confirmed to CBS News.</p> <p>Singhal said the county was working with state and federal health officials to investigate the death, which might lead to changes in guidelines for doctors treating Americans facing severe illness from the virus.</p>

Aside from weeks of excruciating rashes and lesions, authorities have said most cases in the outbreak have gotten better with only minimal treatment. Only a handful of reported cases have faced more dangerous symptoms.

The CDC [says](#) young children under eight years old, people who are pregnant or immunocompromised and people with a history of eczema "may be at especially increased risk for severe outcomes" from the virus.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported [early data](#) on Thursday suggesting that some people with HIV – who make up a large portion of cases in the outbreak so far – may be at higher risk of being hospitalized with the disease, especially if their HIV was untreated.

In the Houston death reported last month, officials confirmed the patient was "severely immunocompromised." Singhal declined to confirm additional details about their case, saying they were "early in the investigation" of the death.

The CDC count 18 confirmed monkeypox deaths outside the U.S. in connection with the current outbreak. The CDC says [eight of the deaths around the world](#) are in "locations that have not historically reported monkeypox."

There have been no confirmed monkeypox deaths in the U.S. in connection with this outbreak.

The monkeypox response

The death in Los Angeles comes at a turning point for the Biden administration's response to the virus, which recently passed 20,000 reported infections nationwide.

Once in scarce supply, officials say doses of the monkeypox vaccine are now widely available in many states thanks to the administration's dose-sparing "intradermal" strategy. More than 70% of doses are now being given intradermally, officials said.

"So now that supply is less of an issue, we need to make sure we focus on maintaining demand by making sure that people know that effective and safe vaccine is available for those that could benefit," Bob Fenton, the White House's top monkeypox official, [said](#) Wednesday.

CDC officials have said since August that the agency might soon expand its [recommendations](#) to health departments now rationing out the vaccine, which currently urge jurisdictions to prioritize shots for "post-exposure prophylaxis" for people "after known or presumed exposure to someone with monkeypox."

Of the more than a million vials of vaccine allocated [nationwide](#), jurisdictions have requested 775,033 doses from the Biden administration.

Officials have credited the vaccination campaign for helping drive a slowdown in the [pace](#) of newly reported monkeypox cases. In a technical report [last week](#), the CDC said it predicted the U.S. outbreak was on track to "grow very slowly" over the coming month "likely with a declining growth rate."

However, the agency also acknowledged it had "low confidence" in the assessment. Some states are now beginning to see "accelerating" outbreaks of the virus, the CDC noted.

The new phase of the outbreak has also heralded a leadership reshuffling at the CDC, which recently tapped the head of its National Center for HIV, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention (NCHHSTP) to take over management of the response.

The agency also recently tweaked its monkeypox [guidance](#), removing a line that emphasized that monkeypox did not meet the textbook definition of a sexually transmitted disease.

Return to Top	<p>"Monkeypox is often transmitted through close, sustained physical contact, almost exclusively associated with sexual contact in the current outbreak," the CDC says in its new recommendations.</p> <p>"Monkeypox poses new concerns to health and safety. It requires that all of us step up with our expertise, tools, partnerships, programs, and talent," NCHHSTP head Dr. Jono Mermin wrote in a letter announcing his new role heading the monkeypox response.</p> <p>The agency's ranks working on monkeypox have also swelled over the past few months, amid the growing complexity of the outbreak.</p> <p>Among the new challenges soon to be on Mermin's plate: the CDC recently spotted a "significant" mutation in the monkeypox virus that resulted in at least three infected Californians who were initially given "false negative" results.</p> <p>While scientists believe the mutation is still rare, the change prompted the agency to issue a warning to labs urging them to update their tests to guard against missed cases.</p> <p>That warning came just weeks after the agency had also urged some labs to double check some of their results because of "false positives" spotted in women and children incorrectly diagnosed with the virus.</p> <p>"Many people within CDC and NCHHSTP are currently working on the monkeypox response, and many public health colleagues throughout the nation are being asked to take on additional responsibilities. I look forward to joining them in this effort," wrote Mermin.</p>
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HEADLINE	09/09 Russian propagandists confront reality
SOURCE	https://www.thedailybeast.com/russian-state-media-admits-vladimir-putins-worst-case-scenario-in-ukraine-war-is-coming-true?ref=home
GIST	<p>In the beginning of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the Kremlin's top propagandists predicted a swift victory and derided the Ukrainian military as an unwilling bunch of incompetents. As the war dragged on, they continued to claim that Volodymyr Zelensky's government was about to fall. Faced with Ukraine's mounting counteroffensive, which is rapidly achieving impressive gains, Russian propagandists are now describing an enormous horde, armed with the best Western weaponry and swimming in foreign specialists.</p> <p>With state TV studios full of doom and gloom, prominent pundits and experts seem to be preparing Russian audiences for future losses of occupied Ukrainian lands, which are being painstakingly reclaimed by the Ukrainian military. During Wednesday's broadcast of the state TV show <i>60 Minutes</i>, host Evgeny Popov said: "We wish courage to our warriors, who are indeed doing very important work, they are resisting an enormous horde that has been trained in the West."</p> <p>Evgeny Buzhinsky, a retired Lieutenant-General of the Russian Armed Forces, claimed that the Ukrainian military is overflowing with American participants: "There are not only advisers, but specialists. I think that there are thousands of American advisers and specialists on the ground in Ukraine, they're probably present in every unit."</p> <p>During his Wednesday's radio show, <i>Full Contact</i>, top Kremlin propagandist Vladimir Solovyov—with a noticeably bruised face—surmised: "I'm worried. Naturally, we want for our guys to crush [the other side] and only to advance, but life doesn't work that way." Solovyov refused to address the source of his injuries, but in light of Ukrainian military gains, his bruised ego was likewise on full display.</p> <p>By the time his nightly program <i>The Evening With Vladimir Solovyov</i> started, the host's facial abrasions had been covered with makeup. Speaking to State Duma deputy Andrey Gurulyov, who is a former deputy commander of Russia's southern military district, Solovyov attempted to downplay his initial reaction to Russia's recent losses. "Comrade Lieutenant General, you always speak so beautifully and convincingly.</p>

Calm people down, because there are all sorts of rumors. I can only imagine what would happen if Telegram existed in 1942-1943,” he said. Gurulyov grimly replied: “Today, I believe there is a difficult situation on one of our fronts. Yes, Ukrainians concentrated their assault troops there and started to advance.”

Hemming and hawing, Gurulyov added: “We’ll need some time to bring things back to order. Yes, the situation isn’t easy. Were mistakes made? Yes, probably so. You can’t avoid mistakes in life or in war.” Solovyov warned that no matter what, there would be no peace deal with Ukraine: “There won’t be a Minsk-3... The frontline can breathe, there can be local failures, there could be excited screams coming from Kharkiv and Kyiv. That won’t change our general hard line... we’ll suffocate this serpent. There are no other options... We’ll bury as many of them as we need to.”

Appearing on Solovyov’s show, military expert Mikhail Onufrienko threw aside the term “special military operation” and complained: “This is a difficult war, it’s a big war, the world hasn’t seen wars of this magnitude since WWII, at least after Vietnam... The panic is being stoked not by the Ukrainian side, not by the Kyiv regime or Western sources, but by our own patriotic [social media] channels... Nonetheless, objectively speaking, this is the most successful advance of the junta since February 24... We clearly don’t have enough troops to contain them... but they couldn’t take Balakliya.”

Pro-Kremlin propagandists have lost that bit of joy as well, given that as of Thursday, Ukraine has retaken Balakliya—a strategically important city. During a briefing in Kyiv, Ukrainian Brigadier General Oleksiy Gromov said that Ukraine had retaken about 700 square kilometers of territory in both the east and south of the country.

During Thursday’s airing of *60 Minutes*, Apti Alaudinov, the commander of Ramzan Kadyrov’s Chechen detachment “Akhmat,” revisited his routine [portrayal](#) of Russia’s war as a battle against the Antichrist. “Let me assure everyone who thinks that we lost something or were defeated somewhere, let me remind you of an old proverb: being defeated in a battle doesn’t mean losing the war,” he said. “Don’t you worry about a thing, everything is fine.”

Host Olga Skabeeva tried to comfort the audiences by claiming that everything is going according to the plan: “If social media and ‘couch-experts’ existed during WWII, Stalin would have surely lost his mind. We won’t succumb to panic,” Skabeeva’s pep talk notwithstanding, the long faces in the studio spoke louder than words.

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HEADLINE	09/08 Australia flu season: foreshadow US?
SOURCE	https://abcnews.go.com/Health/australias-flu-season-foreshadow-us-fall/story?id=89454209
GIST	<p>Australia is nearing the end of its worst flu season in at least five years, which could be a sign of what's to come in the United States heading into the fall and winter.</p> <p>According to data from Australia's Department of Health and Aged Care, as of Aug. 28, there have been nearly 218,000 laboratory-confirmed cases of influenza reported to the country's National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System.</p> <p>The season came on earlier than usual and, during its height in June, more than 30,000 cases were being reported to the NNDDS per week, according to the latest surveillance report. Comparatively, at the height of the season in 2017 there were 25,000 cases being reported every week.</p> <p>Additionally, there have been 1,708 influenza-related hospitalizations -- 6.5% of which were admitted to intensive care units -- and 288 deaths associated with the virus in Australia to date during this season.</p> <p>Meanwhile, there was just one flu-linked hospitalization and no deaths last year, health department data shows.</p>

Researchers and modelers often look to the southern hemisphere, which experiences its flu season first -- typically from May to October -- to predict how the season will look in the U.S., and experts tell ABC News we should take warning from Australia.

"We often look to Australia and the southern hemisphere as a signal of what we may expect," said Dr. John Brownstein, an epidemiologist at Boston Children's Hospital and an ABC News contributor. "Obviously, it's not a perfect 1-to-1 match but, more often than not, the severity of the flu season in Australia is a good correlate of what we might expect, and it helps us prepare."

During the last two years, not as many cases were reported in the U.S. compared to previous years due to COVID-19-related mitigation measures in place, such as mask-wearing and social distancing, as well as school and business closures.

One [study from Wayne State University](#) looking at Detroit Medical Center found there were no positive tests for influenza A or B among adults or children during the 2020-21 flu season. However, during the 2019-20 flu season, 13% of adults' tests and 20% of children's tests were positive for the virus.

Another [study examining Akron Children's Hospital](#) in Ohio found no cases of influenza A and just two cases of influenza B were detected during the 2020-21 season -- a 99% decrease from the prior season.

But with COVID-19 expected to peak again in December 2022 or January 2023 and with less flu immunity among the population and fewer mitigation measures, this could be the first time Americans have to grapple with two respiratory viruses at the same time, which could put a further strain on hospital systems.

"Given the concerns we have about health care capacity and health care burnout, the last thing we want is to have parallel epidemics at a time when our health systems are stretched thin," Brownstein said.

Health experts said they are highly recommending Americans get their flu shots by the end of October to get the best protection but say it is never too late, even if people get the shot later into the season.

"One of the potential things that could make flu come back with a vengeance is low immunity," Dr. Shira Doron, an infectious disease physician and hospital epidemiologist at Tufts Medical Center in Boston, told ABC News. "It's definitely important now more than ever because there's a potential for a bad flu season and a bad COVID season."

She added, "In fact, [Tufts was] still requiring [flu vaccination] of any new employees or vendors until June 1 because last flu season went so long, so it's never too late."

The experts also add that flu can lead to severe disease and death, so it's important to lower the risk of infection as much as possible.

"While COVID has dominated headlines for years now, we have to remember that flu is a serious infection and while most who get the flu recover, we have to recognize that flu leads to tens of thousands of hospitalizations and thousands of deaths," Brownstein said. "A portion of flu infections could result in severe illness and death. Just like we try to mitigate risk of COVID infection, we have to try to provide a similar effort against flu infection."

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HEADLINE	09/08 India, China pull troops back key area
SOURCE	https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/indian-chinese-soldiers-pull-back-key-border-area-89519728
GIST	NEW DELHI -- Indian and Chinese soldiers are pulling back from a key friction point on their disputed border as part of efforts to lower tensions in a more than two-year standoff that has sometimes led to deadly clashes, the countries' defense ministries said.

	<p>"The Indian and Chinese troops in the area of Gogra-Hotsprings have begun to disengage in a coordinated and planned way, which is conducive to the peace and tranquility in the border areas," the Indian ministry said in a statement Thursday.</p> <p>On Friday, China's Defense Ministry issued a virtually identical statement, only substituting the Chinese name for the area, "Jianan Daban."</p> <p>The disengagement followed a 16th round of commander-level talks between the two countries in July.</p> <p>There are three key friction points between the countries, at Depsang, Pangong and Gogra-Hotsprings. Some disengagement of troops occurred last year from the Pangong Tso sector.</p> <p>The two countries have stationed tens of thousands of soldiers backed by artillery, tanks and fighter jets along the de facto border, called the Line of Actual Control.</p> <p>In a deadly clash with clubs, stones and fists in June 2020, India said it lost 20 troops and China said it lost four soldiers.</p> <p>The Line of Actual Control separates Chinese and Indian-held territories from Ladakh in the west to India's eastern state of Arunachal Pradesh, which China claims in its entirety. India and China fought a war over the border in 1962.</p>
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HEADLINE	09/08 WMO predicts 'triple dip' La Niña
SOURCE	https://abcnews.go.com/US/triple-dip-la-nia-meteorologists-predict-coming/story?id=89414178
GIST	<p>Changing temperatures around the world have led to several climate emergencies so far in 2022, from historic flooding in Pakistan that's displaced millions of people to the rapid melting of a major glacier in Antarctica.</p> <p>Parts of the world are expected to experience severe weather for the rest of the year and into 2023, as part of a rare "triple dip La Niña" event, according to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).</p> <p>What is the "triple-dip" La Niña?</p> <p>A "triple-dip" La Niña is a multiyear cooling of the surface temperature of the equatorial Pacific Ocean, which can cause droughts, fierce winds and heavy rainfall.</p> <p>According to WMO, the current La Niña is projected to span three consecutive northern hemisphere winters. It began in September 2020.</p> <p>If it continues for the next six months, it will be the first "triple-dip" La Niña event of the 21st century, WMO says.</p> <p>"It is exceptional to have three consecutive years with a la Niña event. Its cooling influence is temporarily slowing the rise in global temperatures – but it will not halt or reverse the long-term warming trend," Petteri Taalas, the secretary-general of WMO, said in a recent report.</p> <p>La Niñas are usually preceded by El Niño, a weather pattern that warms the surface of the eastern tropical Pacific Ocean; however, an El Niño event did not occur before the current La Niña, according to Michelle L'Heureux, a climate scientist for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).</p> <p>Has it happened before? Will it happen again?</p> <p>While this would be the first "triple-dip" La Niña this century, it's not unprecedented for the weather pattern to last more than nine months to a year, which is typical for a La Niña, according to NOAA.</p>

According to the National Centers for Environmental Prediction, last century, La Niñas occurred several times between 1903 to 2010 and 2010 to 2012.

La Niña's global effect

La Niña occurrences have a devastating global impact because of its effect on weather and climate, Richard Seager, Ph.D., a research professor at Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory of Columbia University, told ABC News.

The weather has caused droughts in North and South America and equatorial eastern Africa. La Niña is also linked to floods in Asia, such as the devastating floods Pakistan has endured since June, Seager said.

NOAA forecasts that the expected La Niña winter season, which is from December 2022 to February 2023, in the U.S. won't be atypical, as the northern Plains, Rockies and Pacific Northwest will also experience cooler temperatures; the South will be hotter than normal and the East Coast may be warmer than it usually is during that time of the year, according to L'Heureux.

Human-induced climate change?

According to WMO, naturally occurring climate events are viewed as happening because of "human-induced climate change," leading to global temperatures and extreme weather conditions.

"The worsening drought in the Horn of Africa and southern South America bear the hallmarks of La Niña, as does the above average rainfall in South-East Asia and Australasia," Taalas said in the report. "The new La Niña Update, unfortunately, confirms regional climate projections that the devastating drought in the Horn of Africa will worsen and affect millions of people."

According to Seager, it isn't safe to say that the changing climate causes this type of La Niña pattern because it has happened before, but he acknowledges that climate change may play a role.

"The record of sea surface temperatures we have that goes back a century and a half shows that the tropical Pacific Ocean has been moving in the direction that, although it warmed up in the west, it hasn't warmed up in the eastern equatorial pacific," Seager said. "So, that trend in sea surface temperatures is making these persistent La La Niñas more likely."

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HEADLINE	09/08 UN appeals for help to flood-hit Pakistan
SOURCE	https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/chief-appeals-world-badly-flood-hit-pakistan-89574472
GIST	<p>ISLAMABAD -- U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres appealed to the world to help Pakistan after arriving in the country Friday to see climate-induced devastation from months of deadly record floods that have left half a million people living in tents under the open sky.</p> <p>His trip comes less than two weeks after Guterres appealed for \$160 million in emergency funding to help those affected by the monsoon rains and floods that have caused at least \$10 billion in damages and 1,391 deaths. International aid is arriving, including the first planeload of what the U.S. has pledged will be \$30 million in assistance.</p> <p>"I have arrived in Pakistan to express my deep solidarity with the Pakistani people after the devastating floods here. I appeal for massive support from the international community as Pakistan responds to this climate catastrophe," he said on Twitter before dawn.</p> <p>Last week, the U.N. chief issued a stern warning about the effects of climate change.</p> <p>"Let's stop sleepwalking toward the destruction of our planet by climate change," he said in a video message to a ceremony in Islamabad at the time. "Today, it's Pakistan. Tomorrow, it could be your country."</p>

Pakistan's Information Minister Maryam Aurangzeb in a statement thanked the U.N. chief for visiting Pakistan at a time when, she said, one-third of Pakistan is underwater. She said she wants the visit to help elevate the crisis for flood victims to the global level.

"The visit will also help in realizing the consequences of the deadly effects of climate change," said, urging the international community to step up efforts to help poor countries affected by floods and natural disasters.

Aurangzeb said Guterres will receive a briefing from Pakistani officials about damages caused by floods before addressing a news conference along with Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif in Islamabad on Friday.

So far, U.N. agencies and several countries have sent nearly 60 planeloads of aid, and authorities say the United Arab Emirates is one of the most generous contributors, as it has sent so far 26 flights carrying aid or flood victims. The United States said it will provide \$30 million in assistance to help flood victims.

The floods have touched all of Pakistan and affected more than 3.3 million people. Heritages sites have also been damaged, including Mohenjo Daro, considered one of the best-preserved ancient urban settlements in South Asia.

The ruins near the Indus River were discovered in 1922 and to this day, mystery surrounds the disappearance of the civilization that dates back 4,500 years, coinciding with those of ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia.

Mohenjo Daro is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and the U.N. heritage agency on Thursday announced an emergency amount of \$350,000 to help recover flood-damaged cultural heritage sites.

Guterres was received on his arrival by Deputy Foreign Minister Hina Rabbani Khar and will meet with Prime Minister Sharif and other government and military officials on his visit.

Before the U.N. chief's arrival, Sharif told a visiting American diplomat that the world should step up its fight against climate change to avoid more deadly flooding. Derek Chollet, a senior State Department official, was visiting Islamabad to assess damages and arrange for aid.

According to the government's statement, Chollet affirmed that the U.S. would stand by Pakistan in the wake of the floods and extend help to help people rebuild.

On Friday, the first American planeload carrying aid will arrive in Pakistan, according to Pakistan officials, who say Washington is setting up a humanitarian aid air bridge to deliver much-needed for flood victims,

Since June, heavy rains and floods have added new burdens to cash-strapped Pakistan and highlighted the disproportionate effect of climate change on impoverished populations. Experts say Pakistan is responsible for only 0.4% of the world's historic emissions blamed for climate change. The U.S. is responsible for 21.5%, China for 16.5% and the EU 15%.

The floods in Pakistan have also injured 12,722 people, destroyed thousands of kilometers of roads, toppled bridges and damaged schools and hospitals, according to the National Disaster Management Agency.

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HEADLINE	09/08 NKorea: never abandon nuclear weapons
SOURCE	https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/korea-give-nukes-counter-us-89567681
GIST	SEOUL, South Korea -- North Korean leader Kim Jong Un stressed his country will never abandon the nuclear weapons it needs to counter the United States, which he accused of pushing to weaken the North's defenses and eventually collapse his government, state media said Friday.

Kim made the comments during a speech Thursday at North Korea's rubber-stamp parliament, where members passed legislation governing the use of nuclear weapons, which Kim described as a step to cement the country's nuclear status and make clear such weapons will not be bargained.

The law spells out conditions where North would be inclined to use its nuclear weapons, including when it determines that its leadership is facing an imminent "nuclear or non-nuclear attack by hostile forces." The law requires North Korea's military to "automatically" execute nuclear strikes against enemy forces, including their "starting point of provocation and the command," if Pyongyang's leadership comes under attack.

The law also says North Korea could use nukes to prevent an unspecified "catastrophic crisis" to its government and people, a loose definition that experts say reflect an escalatory nuclear doctrine that could create greater concerns for neighbors.

Kim also criticized South Korea over its plans to expand its conventional strike capabilities and revive large-scale military exercises with the United States to counter the North's growing threats, describing them as a "dangerous" military action that raises tensions.

Kim has made increasingly provocative threats of nuclear conflict toward the United States and its allies in Asia, also warning that the North would proactively use its nuclear weapons when threatened. His latest comments underscored the growing animosity in the region as he accelerates the expansion of his nuclear weapons and missiles program.

"The purpose of the United States is not only to remove our nuclear might itself, but eventually forcing us to surrender or weaken our rights to self-defense through giving up our nukes, so that they could collapse our government at any time," Kim said in the speech published by the North's official Korean Central News Agency.

"Let them sanction us for 100 days, 1,000 days, 10 years or 100 years," Kim said. "We will never give up our rights to self-defense that preserves our country's existence and the safety of our people just to temporarily ease the difficulties we are experiencing now."

Kim also addressed domestic issues, saying North Korea would begin its long-delayed rollout of COVID-19 vaccines in November. He didn't specify how many doses it would have, where they would come from, or how they would be administered across his population of 26 million people.

GAVI, the nonprofit that runs the U.N.-backed COVAX distribution program, said in June it understood North Korea had accepted an offer of vaccines from China. GAVI said at the time the specifics of the offer were unclear.

North Korea rejected previous offers by COVAX, likely because of international monitoring requirements, and has also ignored U.S. and South Korean offers of vaccines and other COVID-19 aid.

Kim last month declared victory over COVID-19 and ordered preventive measures eased just three months after his government for the first time acknowledged an outbreak. Experts believe the North's disclosures on its outbreak are manipulated to help Kim maintain absolute control.

The North Korean report about Kim's speech came a day after South Korea extended its latest olive branch, proposing a meeting with North Korea to resume temporary reunions of aging relatives separated by the 1950-53 Korean War, which were last held in 2018.

Experts say it's highly unlikely North Korea would accept the South's offer considering the stark deterioration in inter-Korean ties amid the stalemate in larger nuclear talks between Washington and Pyongyang. The U.S.-North Korean diplomacy derailed in 2019 over disagreements in exchanging the release of crippling sanctions against the North and the North's denuclearization steps.

Kim was combative toward South Korea in Thursday's speech and urged his country to expand the operational roles of its tactical nuclear weapons and accelerate their deployment to strengthen the country's war deterrent. Those comments appeared to align with a ruling party decision in June to approve unspecified new operational duties for front-line troops, which analysts say likely include plans to deploy battlefield nuclear weapons targeting rival South Korea along their tense border.

Cheong Seong Chang, a senior analyst at South Korea's Sejong Institute, said Kim's comments and the new North Korean law amount to a warning that it would launch immediate nuclear strikes on the United States and South Korea if they ever attempt to decapitate Pyongyang's leadership.

The North is also communicating a threat that it could use its nuclear weapons during conflicts with South Korea's conventional forces, which would raise the risk of accidental clashes escalating into a nuclear crisis, Cheong said.

North Korea has been speeding its development of nuclear-capable, short-range missiles that can target South Korea since 2019. Experts say its rhetoric around those missiles communicates a threat to proactively use them in warfare to blunt the stronger conventional forces of South Korea and the United States. About 28,500 U.S. troops are stationed in the South to deter aggression from the North.

The U.S.-led diplomatic push to defuse the nuclear standoff has been further complicated by an intensifying U.S.-China rivalry and Russia's war on Ukraine, which deepened the divide in the U.N. Security Council, where Beijing and Moscow have blocked U.S. efforts to tighten sanctions on Pyongyang over its revived long-range missile tests this year.

Kim has dialed up weapons tests to a record pace in 2020, launching more than 30 ballistic weapons, including the first demonstrations of his intercontinental ballistic missiles since 2017.

U.S. and South Korean officials say Kim may up the ante soon by ordering the North's first nuclear test in five years as he pushes a brinkmanship aimed at forcing Washington to accept the idea of the North as a nuclear power and negotiating concessions from a position of strength.

Experts say Kim is also trying to strengthen his leverage by strengthening his cooperation with China and Russia in an emerging partnership aimed at undercutting U.S. influence.

North Korea has repeatedly blamed the United States for the crisis in Ukraine, saying the West's "hegemonic policy" justified Russian military actions in Ukraine to protect itself. U.S. officials said this week the Russians are in the process of purchasing North Korean ammunition, including artillery shells and rockets, to ease their supply shortages in the war against Ukraine.

North Korea also has joined Russia and Syria as the only nations to recognize the independence of two pro-Russia breakaway territories in eastern Ukraine and has discussed send its construction workers to those regions to work on rebuilding.

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Cyber, Tech Awareness

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HEADLINE	09/08 FBI: 'Rewards for Justice' tips paying off
SOURCE	https://www.cyberscoop.com/state-departments-rewards-for-justice/
GIST	<p>The State Department's program offering rewards of up to \$10 million for tips leading to the apprehension of cybercriminals is paying off, FBI Assistant Director for Cyber Bryan Vorndran said Wednesday.</p> <p>"Recently the US government has also started to leverage something that was traditionally used in counterterrorism, Rewards for Justice," Vorndran said. "It's essentially incentivizing individuals who have</p>

intimate knowledge of a criminal conspiracy, whether nation-state or not, to report to the U.S. government. ... That has actually born fruit at this point.”

The FBI declined to elaborate on Vorndran’s comment, which he made at the Billington Cybersecurity Summit in Washington on Wednesday afternoon. State also declined to comment and has a blanket policy forbidding confirmation of such payouts, a spokesperson said.

FBI’s cyber division began participating in Rewards for Justice in August 2020.

On the program website, State lists six [Russian intelligence operatives](#) who officials have blamed for the responsible for the infamous 2017 NotPetya attack and [several members of the Conti](#) ransomware gang. Anyone can submit tips through secure channels such as Signal, Telegram or via Tor.

Last month, Conti landed on the RFJ site for the first time. As of January, there have been more than 1,000 reported victims of Conti-linked attacks who have paid more than \$150 million in ransoms, according to the FBI.

Rewards for Justice can have a paralyzing effect on cybercrime gangs even if no one is arrested, said Brett Callow, a threat analyst at the cybersecurity firm Emsisoft. Including Conti on the RFJ index is “going to create fear and paranoia and make it much harder for them to collaborate,” he said.

Another threat analyst, Allan Liska of Recorded Future, said he wouldn’t be surprised at all to learn that Conti members have been nabbed thanks to RFJ. “\$10 million is a lot of money and Conti is really unpopular,” Liska said by text message.

The FBI and State are [seeking information](#) on Conti associates known as “Tramp,” “Dandis,” “Professor,” “Reshaev” and “Target.” A previous reward offer, [announced May 6](#), promised \$10 million for information leading to the identification and/or location of people who held “a key leadership position” in Conti.

During March congressional testimony, Vorndran highlighted the RFJ program, telling members that in November the [FBI listed alleged Iranian hackers](#) Seyyed Mohammad Hosein Musa Kazemi and Sajjad Kashian on RFJ.

[Kazemi and Kashian have been charged](#) with computer fraud, voter intimidation and transmission of interstate threats as part of a campaign that allegedly ran from August through November of 2020. The two are accused of posing as members of the Proud Boys, a right-wing nationalist hate group, and demanding that voters support former President Trump.

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HEADLINE	09/08 Ransomware’s negative impact patient care
SOURCE	https://www.scmagazine.com/news/ransomware/the-cyberattack-with-the-most-negative-impact-to-patient-care-ransomware
GIST	<p>A study released by Proofpoint in tandem with the Ponemon Institute found that ransomware attacks are the most likely kind of cyberattack to have a negative impact on patient care.</p> <p>The report, released Thursday, said a ransomware attack could lead to procedure or test delays in 64% of the organizations surveyed and longer patient stays for 59%.</p> <p>Overall, 89% of the surveyed organizations experienced an average of 43 attacks in the past 12 months, almost one attack per week. More than 20% suffering the four most common types of attacks — cloud compromise, ransomware, supply chain, and business email compromise — experienced increased patient mortality rates.</p>

“The attacks we analyzed put a significant strain on [healthcare](#) organizations’ resources,” said Larry Ponemon, founder and chairman of the Ponemon Institute. “Their result is not only tremendous cost but also a direct impact on patient care, endangering people’s safety and well being.”

Dave Gerry, chief operating officer at Bugcrowd, said [healthcare](#) continues to be a target of attacks given its enormous attack surface across critical applications, cloud environments, and IoT devices. Gerry said ensuring critical applications, devices and systems are secure should remain the top priority for healthcare security teams.

“Bad actors understand the critical nature of the systems supporting healthcare organizations, and the human impact behind it, leading to an increased likelihood of ransom payments,” Gerry said.

John Gunn, chief executive officer of Token, said poor patient outcomes including potential deaths that result from ransomware attacks will create a liability doomsday for hospitals. Gunn said plaintiff’s lawyers will blame any negative patient outcome that occurs during a cyberattack on the security incident and the hospital’s negligence in not preventing every possible hacking attack.

“Hospitals that are unable to demonstrate the highest levels of cybersecurity will be [exposed to lawsuits and judgements](#) that could easily exceed any ransomware demand,” Gunn said.

Monnia Deng, director of product marketing at Bolster, Inc., said healthcare workers are already burnt out by the pandemic and putting any additional security measures on the end user is self-defeating. Deng said we’ve seen healthcare providers purposely request IT to provide less secure, but easier forms of 2FA so there’s less friction between them and their critical job functions.

“It’s the responsibility of the healthcare IT organization to invest in proactive secure measures such as disaster recovery, endpoint detection and response, and email security,” Deng said. “However, one area that they need to focus more attention on is the threat outside of their ecosystem of devices, systems, servers, and applications. Healthcare organizations have an obligation to proactively seek out malicious phishing sites spoofing their brand and content and reduce their online digital risk by taking these sites down.”

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HEADLINE	09/08 New 'Shikitega' Linux malware
SOURCE	https://www.securityweek.com/new-shikitega-linux-malware-grabs-complete-control-infected-systems
GIST	<p>Security researchers with AT&T Alien Labs are warning of a new piece of malware that can take full control of infected Linux systems, including Internet of Things (IoT) devices.</p> <p>Dubbed Shikitega, the threat is delivered as part of a multi-stage infection chain, where each step is responsible for a part of the payload and fetches and executes the next module.</p> <p>To ensure it can gain full control over an infected system, the malware downloads and executes Metasploit’s ‘Mettle’ meterpreter. It also attempts to exploit system vulnerabilities to escalate privileges and achieve persistence.</p> <p>Shikitega hosts some of its command and control (C&C) servers on legitimate cloud services, uses a polymorphic encoder to evade detection, and deploys a cryptocurrency miner on the infected machines.</p> <p>With the help of Mettle, the attackers can execute attacks such as webcam controls, sniffers, various reverse shells, shell commands, process controls, and more.</p> <p>AT&T Alien Labs also observed the malware using wget to fetch and run a next stage dropper. Shell commands are used to download and execute additional payloads.</p>

	<p>Shikitega, the security researchers say, exploits two known Linux vulnerabilities – CVE-2021-4034 and CVE-2021-3493 – to fetch and execute the final payload – a persistent cryptocurrency miner – with root privileges.</p> <p>The researchers says the malware is using five shell scripts to achieve persistence. The threat sets crontabs for the current user and for the user root – the malware first checks for the presence of crontab command on the machine and creates it if it does not exist.</p> <p>The malware deploys XMRig (a popular miner for Monero) as its final payload and sets a persistence crontab for downloading and executing the miner.</p> <p>To mitigate the risk of infection, AT&T Alien Labs recommends the fundamental protections of installing security patches in a timely manner, keeping server backups, and using anti-malware software on all endpoints.</p>
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HEADLINE	09/08 Ransomware attacks linked to Iran hackers
SOURCE	https://www.infosecurity-magazine.com/news/ransomware-iran-dev-0270-hackers/
GIST	<p>Security researchers have linked multiple ransomware campaigns to DEV-0270 (also known as Nemesis Kitten).</p> <p>The threat actor, widely considered a sub-group of Iranian actor PHOSPHORUS, conducts various malicious network operations on behalf of the Iranian government, according to a new write-up by Microsoft.</p> <p>However, judging from the threat actor’s geographic and sectoral targeting (which often lacked a strategic value for the regime), Microsoft also speculated that some of DEV-0270’s attacks might be a form of moonlighting for personal or company-specific revenue generation.</p> <p>From a technical standpoint, the tech giant said DEV-0270 leverages exploits, particularly for newly disclosed high-severity vulnerabilities, to gain access to devices.</p> <p>“DEV-0270 also extensively uses living-off-the-land binaries (LOLBins) throughout the attack chain for discovery and credential access. This extends to its abuse of the built-in BitLocker tool to encrypt files on compromised devices,” the Microsoft advisory explained.</p> <p>The threat actor usually obtains initial access with administrator or system-level privileges by injecting their web shell into a privileged process on a vulnerable web server. It then uses Impacket’s WMIExec to move to other systems on the network laterally and adds or creates a new user account to maintain persistence.</p> <p>DEV-0270 was also seen using several defensive evasion techniques to avoid detection, including turning off Microsoft Defender Antivirus.</p> <p>In some cases where encryption was successful, Microsoft said the time to ransom (TTR) between initial access and the ransom note was reportedly around two days.</p> <p>“The group has been observed demanding USD 8,000 for decryption keys,” the company wrote. “In addition, the actor has been observed pursuing other avenues to generate income through their operations.”</p> <p>For instance, in one attack observed by Microsoft, a victim organization refused to pay the ransom, so the actor posted the stolen data from the organization for sale packaged in an SQL database dump.</p> <p>“We hope this analysis, which Microsoft is using to protect customers from related attacks, further exposes and disrupts the expansion of DEV-0270’s operations,” the tech giant wrote.</p>

	<p>A full list of DEV-0270's tactics and techniques, alongside some mitigation steps for the threat, are available in the original text of the Microsoft advisory.</p> <p>The blog post comes days after Iran-based threat actor MuddyWater was seen leveraging the exploitation of Log4j 2 vulnerabilities in SysAid applications to target organizations in Israel.</p>
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HEADLINE	09/08 'GIFShell': new attack technique
SOURCE	https://www.bleepingcomputer.com/news/security/gifshell-attack-creates-reverse-shell-using-microsoft-teams-gifs/
GIST	<p>A new attack technique called 'GIFShell' allows threat actors to abuse Microsoft Teams for novel phishing attacks and covertly executing commands to steal data using ... GIFs.</p> <p>The new attack scenario, shared exclusively with BleepingComputer, illustrates how attackers can string together numerous Microsoft Teams vulnerabilities and flaws to abuse legitimate Microsoft infrastructure to deliver malicious files, commands, and perform exfiltrating data via GIFs.</p> <p>As the data exfiltration is done through Microsoft's own servers, the traffic will be harder to detect by security software that sees it as legitimate Microsoft Team's traffic.</p> <p>Overall, the attack technique utilizes a variety of Microsoft Teams flaws and vulnerabilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bypassing Microsoft Teams security controls allows external users to send attachments to Microsoft Teams users. ▪ Modify sent attachments to have users download files from an external URL rather than the generated SharePoint link. ▪ Spoof Microsoft teams attachments to appear as harmless files but download a malicious executable or document. ▪ Insecure URI schemes to allow SMB NTLM hash theft or NTLM Relay attacks. ▪ Microsoft supports sending HTML base64 encoded GIFs, but does not scan the byte content of those GIFs. This allows malicious commands to be delivered within a normal-looking GIF. ▪ Microsoft stores Teams messages in a parsable log file, located locally on the victim's machine, and accessible by a low-privileged user. ▪ Microsoft servers retrieve GIFs from remote servers, allowing data exfiltration via GIF filenames. <p>GIFShell - a reverse shell via GIFs</p> <p>The new attack chain was discovered by cybersecurity consultant and pentester Bobby Rauch, who found numerous vulnerabilities, or flaws, in Microsoft Teams that can be chained together for command execution, data exfiltration, security control bypasses, and phishing attacks.</p> <p>The main component of this attack is called 'GIFShell,' which allows an attacker to create a reverse shell that delivers malicious commands via base64 encoded GIFs in Teams, and exfiltrates the output through GIFs retrieved by Microsoft's own infrastructure.</p> <p>To create this reverse shell, the attacker must first convince a user to install a malicious stager that executes commands, and uploads command output via a GIF url to a Microsoft Teams web hook. However, as we know, phishing attacks work well in infecting devices, Rauch came up with a novel phishing attack in Microsoft Teams to aid in this, which we describe in the next section.</p> <p>GIFShell works by tricking a user into loading a malware executable called the "stager" on their device that will continuously scan the Microsoft Teams logs located at <code>\$HOME\AppData\Roaming\Microsoft\Teams\IndexedDB\https_teams.microsoft.com_0.indexeddb.level db*.log</code>.</p>

All received messages are saved to these logs and are readable by all Windows user groups, meaning any malware on the device can access them.

Once the stager is in place, a threat actor would create their own Microsoft Teams tenant and contact other Microsoft Teams users outside of their organization. Attackers can easily achieve this as [Microsoft allows external communication by default](#) in Microsoft Teams.

To initiate the attack, the threat actor can use Rauch's [GIFShell Python script](#) to send a message to a Microsoft Teams user that contains a specially crafted GIF. This legitimate GIF image has been modified to include commands to execute on a target's machine.

When the target receives the message, the message and the GIF will be stored in Microsoft Team's logs, which the malicious stager monitors.

When the stager detects a message with a GIF, it will extract the base64 encoded commands and execute them on the device. The GIFShell PoC will then take the output of the executed command and convert it to base64 text.

This base64 text is used as the filename for a remote GIF embedded in a Microsoft Teams Survey Card that the stager submits to the attacker's public Microsoft Teams webhook.

As Microsoft Teams renders flash cards for the user, Microsoft's servers will connect back to the attacker's server URL to retrieve the GIF, which is named using the base64 encoded output of the executed command.

The GIFShell server running on the attacker's server will receive this request and automatically decode the filename allowing the attackers to see the output of the command run on the victim's device...

The threat actors can continue using the GIFShell server to send more GIFs, with further embedded commands to execute, and continue to receive the output when Microsoft attempts to retrieve the GIFs.

As these requests are made by the Microsoft website, urlp.asm.skype.com, used for regular Microsoft Teams communication, the traffic will be seen as legitimate and not detected by security software.

This allows the GIFShell attack to covertly exfiltrate data by mixing the output of their commands with legitimate Microsoft Teams network communication.

Even worse, as Microsoft Teams runs as a background process, it does not even need to be opened by the user to receive the attacker's commands to execute.

The Microsoft Teams logs folder have also been found accessed by other programs, including business monitoring software, such as Veriato, and [potentially malware](#).

Microsoft acknowledged the research but said it would not be fixed as no security boundaries were bypassed.

"For this case, 72412, while this is great research and the engineering team will endeavor to improve these areas over time, these all are post exploitation and rely on a target already being compromised," Microsoft told Rauch in an email shared with BleepingComputer.

"No security boundary appears to be bypassed. The product team will review the issue for potential future design changes, but this would not be tracked by the security team."

Abusing Microsoft teams for phishing attacks

As we previously said, the GIFShell attack requires the installation of an executable that executes commands received within the GIFs.

To aid in this, Rauch discovered Microsoft Teams flaws that allowed him to send malicious files to Teams users but spoof them to look as harmless images in phishing attacks.

"This research demonstrates how it is possible to send highly convincing phishing attachments to victims through Microsoft Teams, without any way for a user to pre-screen whether the linked attachment is malicious or not," explains Rauch in [his writeup](#) on the phishing method.

As we previously said in our discussion about GIFShell, Microsoft Teams allows Microsoft Teams users to message users in other Tenants by default.

However, to prevent attackers from using Microsoft Teams in malware phishing attacks, [Microsoft does not allow](#) external users to send attachments to members of another tenant.

While playing with attachments in Microsoft Teams, Rauch discovered that when someone sends a file to another user in the same tenant, Microsoft generates a Sharepoint link that is embedded in a JSON POST request to the Teams endpoint.

This JSON message, though, can then be modified to include any download link an attacker wants, even external links. Even worse, when the JSON is sent to a user via Teams' conversation endpoint, it can also be used to send attachments as an external user, bypassing Microsoft Teams' security restrictions.

In addition to using this Microsoft Teams spoofing phishing attack to send malicious files to external users, attackers can also modify the JSON to use Windows URIs, such as *ms-excel:*, to automatically launch an application to retrieve a document.

Rauch says this would allow attackers to trick users into connecting to a remote network share, letting threat actors steal NTLM hashes, or local attackers [perform an NTLM relay attack](#) to elevate privileges.

"These allowed, potentially unsafe URI schemes, combined with the lack of permissions enforcement and attachment spoofing vulnerabilities, can allow for a One Click RCE via NTLM relay in Microsoft Teams," Rauch explains in his report on the spoofing attack.

Microsoft not immediately fixing bugs

Rauch told BleepingComputer that he disclosed the flaws to Microsoft in May and June of 2022, and despite Microsoft saying they were valid issues, they decided not to fix them immediately.

When BleepingComputer contacted Microsoft about why the bugs were not fixed, we were not surprised by their response regarding the GIFShell attack technique, as it requires the device to already be compromised with malware.

"This type of phishing is important to be aware of and as always, we recommend that users practice good computing habits online, including exercising caution when clicking on links to web pages, opening unknown files, or accepting file transfers.

We've assessed the techniques reported by this researcher and have determined that the two mentioned do not meet the bar for an urgent security fix. We're constantly looking at new ways to better resist phishing to help ensure customer security and may take action in a future release to help mitigate this technique." – a Microsoft spokesperson.

However, we were surprised that Microsoft did not consider the ability of external attackers to bypass security controls and send attachments to another tenant as not something that should be immediately fixed.

Furthermore, not immediately fixing the ability to modify JSON attachment cards so that Microsoft Teams recipients could be tricked to download files from remote URLs was also surprising.

	<p>However, Microsoft has left the door open to resolving these issues, telling BleepingComputer that they may be serviced in future versions.</p> <p>"Some lower severity vulnerabilities that don't pose an immediate risk to customers are not prioritized for an immediate security update, but will be considered for the next version or release of Windows," explained Microsoft in a statement to BleepingComputer.</p>
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HEADLINE	09/08 Bumblebee malware post-exploitation tool
SOURCE	https://www.bleepingcomputer.com/news/security/bumblebee-malware-adds-post-exploitation-tool-for-stealthy-infections/
GIST	<p>A new version of the Bumblebee malware loader has been spotted in the wild, featuring a new infection chain that uses the PowerSploit framework for stealthy reflective injection of a DLL payload into memory.</p> <p>Bumblebee was discovered in April, involved in phishing campaigns believed to be orchestrated by the same actors behind BazarLoader and TrickBot, i.e., the Conti syndicate.</p> <p>As Bumblebee is an evolved loader with advanced anti-analysis and anti-detection features, it was assumed that it would replace other loaders, such as BazarLoader, in initial compromise attacks followed by ransomware deployment.</p> <p>Bumblebee's distribution rate reached notable levels in the ensuing months, yet the new loader never became dominant in the field.</p> <p>According to a report by Cyble, based on a finding by threat researcher Max Malyutin, the authors of Bumblebee are preparing a comeback from the summer hiatus of spam operations, using a new execution flow.</p> <p>Execution from memory</p> <p>Previously, Bumblebee reached victims via emails carrying password-protected zipped ISO files that contained an LNK (for executing the payload) and a DLL file (the payload).</p> <p>In the recent attack, Bumblebee replaced the ISO with a VHD (Virtual Hard Disk) file, which, again, contains an LNK shortcut file (Quote).</p> <p>Instead of executing Bumblebee (DLL) directly, the LNK now executes "imagedata.ps1," which launches a PowerShell window and hides it from the user by abusing the 'ShowWindow' command.</p> <p>The SP1 script is obfuscated using Base64 and string concatenation to evade AV detection while loading the second stage of the PowerShell loader.</p> <p>The second stage features the same obfuscation as the first and contains the PowerSploit module to load the 64-bit malware (LdrAddx64.dll) into the memory of the PowerShell process using reflective injection.</p> <p>"PowerSploit is an open-source post-exploitation framework in which the malware uses a method, Invoke-ReflectivePEInjection, for reflectively loading the DLL into the PowerShell Process," explains Cyble in the report.</p> <p>"This method validates the embedded file and performs multiple checks to ensure that the file is loaded properly on the executing system."</p> <p>With the new loading flow, Bumblebee loads from memory and never touches the host's disk, thus minimizing the chances of being detected and stopped by anti-virus tools.</p>

	By increasing its stealthiness, Bumblebee becomes a more potent initial access threat and increases its chances of enticing ransomware and malware operators looking for ways to deploy their payloads.
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HEADLINE	09/08 NKorea hackers aim at energy providers
SOURCE	https://www.bleepingcomputer.com/news/security/north-korean-lazarus-hackers-take-aim-at-us-energy-providers/
GIST	<p>The North Korean APT group 'Lazarus' (APT38) is exploiting VMWare Horizon servers to access the corporate networks of energy providers in the United States, Canada, and Japan.</p> <p>Lazarus is a state-backed threat actor known for conducting espionage, data theft, and cryptocurrency stealing campaigns over the past decade. The threat actors are responsible for hundreds of sophisticated attacks internationally.</p> <p>According to researchers at Cisco Talos, who uncovered the latest operation, Lazarus targeted the energy organizations between February and July 2022, leveraging public VMWare Horizon exploits for initial access.</p> <p>From there, they used custom malware families like 'VSingle' and 'YamaBot' and a previously unknown remote access trojan (RAT) named 'MagicRAT' that is used to search for and steal data from infected devices.</p> <p>Symantec's threat hunters analyzed the same campaign in April and ASEC researchers in May. However, Cisco's report goes deeper to unveil many more details about the threat actor's activity.</p> <p>Multiple attack strategies</p> <p>Cisco Talos presents several attack strategies that illustrate Lazarus' latest techniques, tactics, and procedures (TTPs) and highlight the versatility of the sophisticated hacking group.</p> <p>In the first case, the threat actors exploit VMWare servers vulnerable to Log4Shell flaws to run shellcode that establishes a reverse shell for running arbitrary commands on the compromised endpoint.</p> <p>Since VMWare Horizon runs with high privileges, Lazarus can deactivate Windows Defender via registry key modifications, WMIC, and PowerShell commands before deploying VSingle.</p> <p>The VSingle backdoor supports advanced network reconnaissance commands, prepares the ground for stealing credentials, creates new admin users on the host, and finally establishes a reverse shell connection with the C2 to fetch plugins that enrich its functionality.</p> <p>In the second case presented in the report, which concerns a different victim, the initial access and reconnaissance follow similar patterns, but this time, the hackers dropped MagicRAT along with VSingle. Talos published a separate post on MagicRAT yesterday, detailing all the functions of this previously unseen trojan.</p> <p>MagicRAT can establish persistence on its own by executing hardcoded commands that create the required scheduled tasks, help in system reconnaissance, and fetch additional malware from C2, like the TigerRAT.</p> <p>In the third intrusion case, Lazarus deploys YamaBot, a custom malware written in Go, featuring standard RAT capabilities such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List files and directories. • Send process information to C2. • Download files from remote locations. • Execute arbitrary commands on the endpoints. • Uninstall itself

The Japanese CERT linked YamaBot with Lazarus [in July 2022](#), highlighting its encrypted C2 communication capabilities.

Lazarus attack chain diversification isn't limited to the final malware payloads but extends to the proxy or reverse tunneling tools and credential harvesting techniques.

In some cases, the hackers employed the Mimikatz and Procdump tools, while in others, they exfiltrated copies of registry hives containing AD credentials.

"In one instance, the attackers tried to obtain Active Directory information on one endpoint via PowerShell cmdlets. However, a day later, the attackers used adfind.exe to extract similar information on the same endpoint," [explains Cisco Talos in the report](#).

The idea behind these variations is to mix up TTPs and make attribution, detection, and defense more challenging for incident responders.

As highlighted in this report, Lazarus is closely monitored by cybersecurity firms, so they can't afford to become lazy in diversifying their attack chains.

This diversification in attacks is illustrated in the Lazarus hacker's [wide range of attacks](#), including their [targeting of IT job seekers](#), the [creation of fake cryptocurrency trading apps](#), the creation of [trojanized development tools](#), the [use of ransomware as decoys](#), and the massive [\\$620 million theft of cryptocurrency theft](#) from the Ronin bridge.

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HEADLINE	09/08 Stolen classified NATO documents for sale
SOURCE	https://www.bleepingcomputer.com/news/security/classified-nato-documents-stolen-from-portugal-now-sold-on-darkweb/
GIST	<p>The Armed Forces General Staff agency of Portugal (EMGFA) has suffered a cyberattack that allegedly allowed the theft of classified NATO documents, which are now sold on the dark web.</p> <p>EMGFA is the government agency responsible for the control, planning, and operations of the armed forces of Portugal.</p> <p>The agency only realized they suffered a cyberattack after hackers posted samples of the stolen material on the dark web, offering to sell the files to interested individuals.</p> <p>American cyber-intelligence agents noticed the sale of stolen documents and alerted the U.S. embassy in Lisbon, which in turn warned the Portuguese government about the data breach.</p> <p>Immediately, a team of experts from the National Security Office (GNS) and Portugal's national cybersecurity center was dispatched to EMGFA to carry out a complete screening of the body's entire network.</p> <p>The story came to light by local news organization Diario de Noticias, which claims it has confirmed the validity of the information via unnamed sources close to the ongoing investigations.</p> <p>These sources told the news outlet that the leaked documents are of "extreme gravity," so their dissemination might cause a crisis with the country's credibility in the military alliance.</p> <p>"It was a cyberattack prolonged in time and undetectable, through bots programmed to detect this type of documents, which were later removed in several stages," stated one of DN's sources.</p>

	<p>The computers used by EMGFA are air-gapped, but the exfiltration used standard non-secure lines. Hence, the first conclusion of the investigation is that the top military body has broken its operational security rules at some point.</p> <p>As of today, no official statement has been issued by the Portuguese state on the topic, but the pressure for a briefing by the political opposition is rising following DN's revelations.</p> <p>Many members of the parliament expressed their surprise today with the news about classified military documents being sold on the internet and the country's intelligence services failing to detect such a highly critical breach.</p> <p>Hence, they requested the chairman of the parliamentary defense committee, Marcos Perestrello, to intercede so that hearings regarding the incident were scheduled as soon as possible.</p> <p>BleepingComputer has reached out to Portugal's PM office, the Ministry of Defense, and EMGFA, and we will update this post as soon as we receive a response.</p>
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HEADLINE	09/08 Vulnerability exploits top attack vector
SOURCE	https://www.darkreading.com/vulnerabilities-threats/vulnerability-exploits-phishing-top-attack-vector-initial-compromise
GIST	<p>Breaches involving phishing and credential compromise have received a lot of attention in recent years because of how frequently threat actors have employed the tactics in executing both targeted and opportunistic attacks. But that doesn't mean that enterprise organizations can afford to lessen their focus on vulnerability patching one bit.</p> <p>A report from Kaspersky this week identified more initial intrusions last year resulting from exploitation of vulnerabilities in Internet-facing applications than breaches involving malicious emails and compromised accounts <i>combined</i>. And data the company has collected through the second quarter of 2022 suggests the same trend might be playing out this year as well.</p> <p>Kaspersky's analysis of its 2021 incident-response data showed that breaches involving vulnerability exploits surged from 31.5% of all incidents in 2020 to 53.6% in 2021. Over the same period, attacks associated with the use of compromised accounts to gain initial access declined from 31.6% in 2020 to 17.9% last year. Initial intrusions resulting from phishing emails decreased from 23.7% to 14.3% during the same period.</p> <p>Exchange Server Flaws Fuel the Exploit Frenzy</p> <p>Kaspersky attributed the surge in exploit activity last year as likely tied to the multiple critical Exchange Server vulnerabilities that Microsoft disclosed, including a set of four zero-days in March 2021 known as the ProxyLogon flaws (CVE-2021-26855, CVE-2021-26857, CVE-2021-26858, CVE-2021-27065). When chained together they allowed attackers to gain complete remote control over on-premises Exchange Servers.</p> <p>Attackers — which included organized criminal gangs and state-sponsored groups from China — quickly exploited tens of thousands of vulnerable Exchange Server systems and dropped Web shells on them before Microsoft could issue a patch for the flaws. The vulnerabilities evoked considerable concern because of their ubiquity and severity. They even prompted the US Department of Justice to authorize the FBI to take the unprecedented step of proactively removing ProxyLogon Web shells from servers belonging to hundreds of organizations — in most cases, without any notification.</p> <p>Also driving the exploit activity in 2021 was another trio of Exchange Server vulnerabilities collectively labeled ProxyShell (CVE-2021-31207, CVE-2021-34473, CVE-2021-34523) that attackers used extensively to drop ransomware and in business email compromise (BEC) attacks.</p>

More than a year later, the ProxyLogon and ProxyShell vulnerabilities continue to be targets of heavy exploit activity, says Konstantin Sapronov, head of Kaspersky's Global Emergency Response Team. One of the most severe of these flaws ([CVE-2021-26855](#)) has also been the most targeted. Kaspersky observed the vulnerability — part of the ProxyLogon set — being exploited in 22.7% of all incidents involving vulnerability exploits that it responded to in 2021, and the flaw continues to be a favorite among attackers this year as well, according to Sapronov.

Same Exploitation Trend Likely Playing Out in 2022

Even though several serious vulnerabilities have surfaced this year — including the [ubiquitous Apache Log4j vulnerability](#) (CVE-2021-44228) — the most exploited vulnerabilities of 2021 remain very prevalent in 2022 as well, Sapronov says, even beyond the Exchange server bugs. For instance, Kaspersky identified a flaw in Microsoft's MSHTML browser engine (CVE-2021-40444, patched last September) as the most [heavily attacked vulnerability](#) in the second quarter of 2022.

"Vulnerabilities in popular software such as MS Exchange Server and library Log4j have resulted in a huge number of attacks," Sapronov notes. "Our advice to enterprise customers is to pay close attention to patch management issues."

Time to Prioritize Patching

Others have noted a similar spike in vulnerability exploit activity. In April, researchers from Palo Alto Networks' Unit 42 threat research team noted how 31%, or [nearly one in three incidents](#), they had analyzed up to that point in 2022 involved vulnerability exploits. In more than half (55%) of those, threat actors had targeted ProxyShell.

Palo Alto researchers also found threat actors typically scanning for systems with a just-disclosed flaw literally minutes after the CVE is announced. In one instance, they observed an authentication bypass flaw in an F5 network appliance (CVE-2022-1388) being targeted 2,552 times in the first 10 hours after vulnerability disclosure.

Post-Exploitation Activity is Tough to Spot

Kaspersky's analysis of its incident-response data showed that in nearly 63% of cases, attackers managed to stay unnoticed in a network for more than a month after gaining initial entry. In many cases, this was because the attackers used legitimate tools and frameworks such as PowerShell, Mimikatz, and PsExec to collect data, escalate privileges, and execute commands.

When someone did quickly notice a breach, it was typically because the attackers had created obvious damage, such as during a ransomware attack. "It's easy to detect a ransomware attack when your data is encrypted, as services are unavailable, and you have a ransom note on your monitor," Sapronov says.

But when the target is a company's data, attackers need more time to roam around the victim's network to collect necessary information. In such cases, attackers act more stealthily and cautiously, which makes these kinds of attacks harder to detect. "To detect such cases, we suggest employing a security tool stack with extended detection and response (EDR)-like telemetry and implement rules for detection of pervasive tools used by adversaries," he says.

Mike Parkin, senior technical engineer at Vulcan Cyber, says the real takeaway for enterprise organizations is that attackers will take any opportunity they can to breach a network.

"With a range of exploitable vulnerabilities, it's not a surprise to see an uptick," he says. Whether the numbers are higher for vulnerabilities over socially engineered credential attacks, is hard to say, he notes. "But the bottom line is threat actors will use the exploits that work. If there's a new remote code exploit on some Windows service, they'll flock to it and breach as many systems as they can before the patches come out or firewall rules get deployed," he says.

	The real challenge is the long-tail vulnerabilities: The ones that are older, like ProxyLogon, with vulnerable systems that have been missed or are ignored, Parkin says, adding that patching must be a priority.
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HEADLINE	09/08 Queen Elizabeth II internet legacy to live on
SOURCE	https://www.wired.com/story/how-the-internet-will-remember-the-queen/
GIST	<p>THE DEATH OF Queen Elizabeth II was expected for years—and presaged by strong rumors on social media. It’s fitting for a woman of her global stature and recognition that the online conversation today has been dominated by discussions of the queen.</p> <p>For a 96-year-old representing an institution that dates back centuries, the queen was more tech-savvy than many imagine. Defying stereotypes about women of her age, Elizabeth—through her handlers—was an enthusiastic adherent of technology. She sent her first email when visiting the Royal Signals and Radar Establishment in Malvern, England, in 1976 as part of the early development of Arpanet, the precursor to today’s global internet.</p> <p>The queen’s username? HME2: Her Majesty, Elizabeth II. “All she had to do was press a couple of buttons,” Peter Kirstein, the man who helped set up the queen’s email account back then, told WIRED in 2012.</p> <p>She wasn’t just an early adopter of email. In 1997, she launched the first version of the royal family’s website, years before some major UK newspapers decided to go online. Ten years later, she launched the family’s YouTube channel with a rare video of the first televised Christmas Broadcast in 1957. She also sent her first tweet in 2014, and she tapped on an iPad and embraced Zoom meetings as her health failed and Covid lockdowns curtailed many of her in-person public engagements.</p> <p>“I think the queen has been extremely savvy on the internet,” said Sadie Quinlan, a pro-royal YouTuber who posts under the name Yankee Wally. (Quinlan has been criticized for her anti-Meghan Markle commentary videos.) “I think she knows what’s going on, and I know she knows it’s quite wild, and life continues on the internet more so than real life.”</p> <p>But in recent years, the queen, whose motto through the royal family was “never complain, never explain,” became more than an early tech adopter. She became a meme, enthusiastically deployed by social media users looking to offer wry commentary on their peers. “The internet loves a little old lady being quirky,” says Idil Galip, who studies memes at the University of Edinburgh and operates the Meme Studies Research Network. That the queen had a love of corgis, at one point owning nine of them, also helped endear her to the online masses. “I think her love of animals has also been an important part of why she has been memefied,” says Galip. “The internet also loves corgis, and so does the queen.”</p> <p>The endless, listless life of building openings and public events also gave the queen plenty of opportunities to become a meme. From her excitement at seeing cows as part of her 90th birthday celebrations in 2016 to cutting a simple cake with a ceremonial sword in 2021, she showed an ability to play to the masses. “I think many people also enjoy getting a peek behind the facade of royal aloofness and being like, ‘Oh she’s just like us,’” says Galip.</p> <p>What makes the queen an ideal meme candidate is the disparity between her serious standing and less-than-solemn actions. “It’s the unexpectedness of it,” says Galip, “like when you’re in school and the stern teacher cracks a joke that no one saw coming. It’s surprising that they have a personality, interests, or a sense of humor when they seem so removed from society.” The queen’s willingness to poke fun at herself and puncture the pomposity of her position also endeared her to the public.</p> <p>One watershed moment in bringing the queen closer to her people occurred in 2012, when she played the straight man to Daniel Craig’s James Bond as part of the launch of the Olympic Games in the country. That video involved the queen—in reality, a stunt person—jumping out of a plane as part of the punch line. It’s a wicked sense of humor she perpetuated a decade later as part of her Diamond Jubilee, hamming</p>

[it up](#) alongside a computer-generated version of Paddington Bear over a cup of tea inside Buckingham Palace.

It was a surprise to see—not least because throughout her reign she preferred to remain largely inscrutable. “Because she is so silent on so many things, and her face is so expressive, even though she doesn’t look like she’s giving it away, she does,” said Quinlan before her passing. (Such expressiveness was made into the [One Is Not Amused meme](#) in 2012.) “You can kind of read into her whatever you want to read. She keeps people guessing. She’s an enigma and a woman of mystery.” For Anastasia Denisova, a senior lecturer in journalism at the University of Westminster who studies memes, that mystery is what makes the queen an enduring meme. “The queen is a vehicle for adding memetic subjectivity,” she says. “The iconography of the queen is very strong too, which makes her perfect material for remixing, along with [Che Guevara](#), [Keanu Reeves](#), and [Willy Wonka](#).”

That flipping of the norms has helped the queen remain popular online, reckons Galip. “The best jokes are ones that have a surprising or unexpected punch line. In internet memes, the same is true,” she says. “The juxtaposition of the image of a normally aloof person and a relatable caption captures that sort of laughter.”

But her illness and age, coupled with her position as a head of state—she had seen 15 UK prime ministers and US presidents from Harry Truman to Joe Biden—made her health the subject of repeated social media speculation, long before today. Multiple rumors about the queen’s ailing health—and [false alarms](#) about her death—were fueled by social media. Her resilience and longevity also made the queen a ripe source for memes, said Jess Maddox, assistant professor of communications and information sciences at the University of Alabama, and an expert in internet culture. “Memes thrive because of communal experience—something we can all share and relate to,” she said. “That being said, sometimes that thing we all relate to is pervasive uncertainty. Queen Elizabeth II has ruled for 70 years, and her death will be a global event that very few people on the planet have lived through. That uncertainty is ripe with meme potential.”

As the queen’s illness progressed, a statement that she had “entered a new phase” of her health became a meme, after her [good health during the pandemic](#) had triggered plenty of memes itself.

Her passing marks a momentous shift in the royal family, in UK society, and also in how the UK head of state and their family members interact with the public. For all the queen’s adoption of tech, she chose to remain remote rather than broadcasting her feelings in public. Her grandchildren’s generation of the royal family—Harry and Meghan, William and Catherine—are more open and willing to share their lives on social media platforms like Instagram. It’s a different way of communicating with the public, but one that remains intrinsically tied to the internet.

“I absolutely adore the queen,” said Quinlan before today’s news. “She’s all I’ve ever known. Even when my life is going upside down, topsy-turvy, there she is, carrying on regardless, no matter what happens in her life.” Quinlan is exactly 30 years younger than the queen. “I don’t think she’s going to die yet,” she said on Thursday afternoon, before the official announcement from Buckingham Palace. “I’m convinced because her mother lived to 104, the queen is going to see at least 100. This news today has absolutely shattered me.”

There will, of course, be as many internet users who joke and poke fun at the death of a 96-year-old woman as those who mourn her passing. But all will remember her, and many will memorialize her through memes. In so doing so, people are helping contextualize the world in which we live and how it changed over her 70-year reign. “The internet may remember Queen Elizabeth II through memes,” says Maddox, “but when we make and share them, we’re really talking about our own uncertainty and reflections on a changing world.”

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HEADLINE	09/08 Thousands bilked govt. for free internet
SOURCE	https://www.washingtonpost.com/us-policy/2022/09/08/fcc-broadband-fraud-coronavirus/

More than 1,000 households in Oklahoma used the identity of a single 4-year-old to obtain free or discounted internet service from the U.S. government, part of a broader wave of suspected fraud now raising new questions about Washington's attempts to close the digital divide.

The apparent plot targeted the Affordable Connectivity Program, which provides up to \$30 each month toward millions of Americans' mobile phone or home internet bills. Similar suspicious activity also surfaced in Ohio and Texas, according to the inspector general for the Federal Communications Commission, a watchdog that uncovered the alleged scam.

In total, the potentially fraudulent activity may have resulted in about \$1.4 million in misspending, according to federal investigators. The government sent that money directly to telecom carriers, which under law accept federal benefits on their subscribers' behalf and apply the discounts to customers' bills. None of the companies that processed the suspect applications and received federal funds are named in the report.

But the FCC's inspector general on Thursday described the matter as a serious threat, one that if left unresolved could undermine the roughly \$14 billion in subsidies Congress adopted last year. And its findings offered a stark reminder of the myriad problems that plagued its decades-old predecessor — an initiative to provide low-cost telephone service that had been riddled with fraud over the years.

David L. Hunt, the agency's inspector general, said in a statement that telecom providers seeking "program support each month after failing to properly train and monitor their sales agents' enrollment activity will be held accountable."

The FCC, meanwhile, said Thursday it had taken steps to root out the fraud and prevent it from occurring again. It directed the independent nonprofit organization that oversees the broadband program to update its application process expeditiously. And the FCC added in a public notice that the government is de-enrolling those who should never have received assistance in the first place.

"We will remain vigilant so that the Affordable Connectivity Program operates as Congress envisioned and stays true to its intended purpose of assisting families most at risk of digital disconnection," the agency said in a statement.

Lawmakers approved the Affordable Connectivity Program on a bipartisan vote last November as part of a sprawling \$1.2 trillion law to improve the nation's infrastructure. The benefit system augmented a broadband initiative [enacted earlier in the coronavirus pandemic](#), as Congress sought to ensure hard-hit, cash-strapped Americans could maintain their internet connections at a time when life, work and school had migrated online.

Known as ACP, the program's guidelines are generous. Families can qualify if they already receive other government support, including low-cost health insurance under Medicaid and low-income education awards known as Pell Grants, or if their income does not exceed 200 percent of the federal poverty line. The up-to-\$30 monthly benefit can go toward a wide array of plans nationally, and the subsidy itself is larger — up to \$75 — for those who live on tribal lands.

Since its adoption, more than 13 million subscribers have enrolled, representing roughly one-quarter of the total number of Americans who are estimated to be eligible. The gap reflects the challenges the government faces in reaching communities that are not connected — and navigating them through what can be a complicated application process. Hoping to boost enrollment, Vice President Harris in recent months has embarked on a nationwide effort to tout the program.

In doing so, though, the government has faced a challenge: encouraging participation while warding off criminals who may be inclined to steal the aid from Washington. The potential scams uncovered by the inspector general for the FCC, revealed in a report Thursday, put that task in sharp relief.

The alleged fraud hinges on a critical stipulation in the program: An entire household is eligible for monthly broadband subsidies even if only one person, including a child or dependent, meets the criteria for participation. A family could receive a monthly \$30 credit, for example, if they have a student who receives free and reduced lunch — even if their parents do not obtain other federal support.

To receive aid this way, applicants for broadband bill credits are asked to provide the name of the child or other dependent through which they qualify. But telecom carriers and the U.S. government apparently did not catch repeated instances in which households used the same child or other dependent's name and address — and in some cases, even their same partial Social Security number — and received monthly support anyway.

In Oklahoma, 1,042 households obtained their broadband aid by saying they had a 4-year-old child — the same 4-year-old — who was receiving Medicaid benefits. The child's name, date of birth and last four digits of their Social Security number “were used over and over again,” according to the FCC, which said the transactions began in December.

Nationally, the FCC's top watchdog discovered 11 other instances in which seemingly eligible applicants had been used to obtain benefits hundreds of times each. In Texas, for example, one unnamed telecom company enrolled 997 households in the government internet program, even though each of the applicants included the same 18-year-old.

In its alert, issued Thursday, the inspector general acknowledged the total amount of improper payments “remains low” — but stressed that the data show “use of this flagrant technique is steady to increasing, particularly for certain providers.”

The findings marked the latest warning from the FCC's top overseer, which this year has highlighted potentially predatory practices on the part of telecom carriers and specific instances of stolen or abused funds. Some of the alerts and enforcement efforts involved an earlier iteration of the internet subsidies, called the Emergency Broadband Benefit, which Congress adopted as part of the American Rescue Plan in 2021.

But fraud targeting government telecom programs long predates the pandemic and the more recent efforts to ensure Americans can afford internet access. For decades, a wide array of threats sapped money from the decades-old program known as Lifeline, which provides low-cost phone service to Americans in need. The FCC issued a slew of massive penalties for abuses that allowed ineligible subscribers to obtain government benefits. In its wake, the FCC, largely under Republicans, tightened it to a point that critics felt it discouraged enrollment.

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HEADLINE	09/08 US seizes \$30M stolen crypto by NKorea
SOURCE	https://www.wsj.com/articles/u-s-recovers-over-30-million-in-cryptocurrency-stolen-by-north-korean-hackers-11662648600?mod=lead_feature_below_a_pos1
GIST	<p>U.S. authorities have seized more than \$30 million in cryptocurrency plundered from an online game this year by hackers linked to North Korea, one of the largest successes clawing back digital revenue from Pyongyang, investigators said.</p> <p>While only a fraction of the hundreds of millions in cryptocurrency purloined, the sum recovered is far higher than previously known. It reflects both the growing capabilities of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and other agencies and the priority the U.S. is giving to thwarting North Korean hackers, whose heists are used to bolster their country's nuclear ambitions, analysts said.</p> <p>Erin Plante, senior director of investigations at the cryptocurrency intelligence firm Chainalysis, which announced the seizure amount Thursday at a conference in Barcelona, said the recovery was among the largest by U.S. law enforcement and had made it more difficult for the North Korean hacking group known as Lazarus Group to access the funds.</p>

“It’s a big deal to have any amount of money clawed back from the Lazarus Group,” Ms. Plante said in an interview. “That didn’t used to happen.”

Sky Mavis Ltd., publisher of the game “Axie Infinity,” said in March that [hackers had infiltrated](#) part of its Ronin Network, the blockchain, or digital ledger, on which the game runs. The infiltrators gained access to accounts holding cryptocurrencies and drained 173,600 ether and 25.5 million of the stablecoin USDC. The assets were worth about \$540 million on the date of the theft.

Sky Mavis said then it was working with Chainalysis, which often supports U.S. law enforcement investigations, to track the stolen funds. The firm said it traced the stolen funds to points where the thieves attempted to convert it to fiat currency, and there law enforcement and partners in the cryptocurrency industry were able to freeze the money.

The recovered cryptocurrency includes about \$5.8 million [seized by Binance](#), a major cryptocurrency exchange, in April, as well as several other seizures at different exchanges, Chainalysis said. The firm didn’t identify the other exchanges, but said the FBI was involved in all of the cases.

The FBI, which has previously publicly linked the Axie Infinity hack to North Korea, didn’t immediately respond to a request for comment.

North Korea’s mission to the United Nations didn’t respond to a request for comment Thursday.

North Korean hackers have for years relied on cybercrimes such as hacking banks or cryptocurrency exchanges or extorting victims with ransomware to generate cash to support the country’s nuclear weapons programs, in violation of international sanctions, Western officials and analysts say.

In July, the U.S. Justice Department said [it had clawed back about half a million dollars](#) of cryptocurrency that a hospital in Kansas paid last year to the same North Korea hacking group. Chainalysis estimates that North Korea has already pilfered more than \$1 billion from [decentralized finance protocols](#), though much of it is likely sitting idle due to the challenge of converting it to fiat cash, Ms. Plante said.

The Axie Infinity recovery represents a shift in law enforcement’s ability to trace funds through a web of so-called crypto addresses, the virtual accounts where cryptocurrencies are stored. These addresses can be created quickly without them being linked to a cryptocurrency company that could freeze the funds.

In its effort to mask the stolen crypto, Lazarus Group used more than 12,000 different addresses, according to Chainalysis. Unlike bank transactions that happen through private networks, movement between crypto accounts is visible to the world on the blockchain.

Advanced blockchain-monitoring tools and cooperation from centralized crypto exchanges enabled the FBI to trace the crypto to where Lazarus Group tried to cash out, investigators said.

Accounting for price fluctuations, the recovered funds are about a 10th of the sum stolen in the March attack, which was the second-largest crypto hack on record at the time. The alleged North Korean operatives targeted a so-called bridge that allows funds to flow between the Ethereum Network, one of the largest blockchains, and the Ronin Network that powers the Axie Infinity game. This enabled them to drain the ether cryptocurrency and the USDC stablecoin.

“A lot of these bridges operate on blockchains that are a bit more obscure and a bit more new,” said Arda Akartuna, a cryptocurrency threat analyst at blockchain analytics firm Elliptic. “If you find a vulnerability, then you potentially manage to hack a large amount.”

Illicit actors obfuscate funds to throw investigators and exchanges off the trail by running them through so-called mixers, which blend stolen funds with those from others, making it difficult to trace the funds’

origin. The Lazarus Group used Tornado Cash, [a mixer recently sanctioned by the Treasury Department](#), before moving the funds to other cryptocurrency blockchains.

Though the amount of money recovered is small compared with North Korea's overall haul, experts said it represented significant progress in law enforcement's ability to complicate the regime's efforts to rely on cryptocurrency to fill its coffers.

"In the past when North Korea stole money from a crypto exchange, that money was gone," Ms. Plante said. "You didn't expect to get any of it back."

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HEADLINE	09/08 Iran-linked hackers target US, UK, Israel
SOURCE	https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2022/sep/8/iranians-surveilling-phones-locations-to-target-we/
GIST	<p>Iran-sponsored hackers used malware to track locations, record phone calls, and extract text messages from targets, according to cybersecurity firm Mandiant.</p> <p>People in the U.S., U.K. and Israel are particularly at-risk, as the cyberattackers aim to victimize western government officials, Iranian dissidents, and academics and journalists.</p> <p>Mandiant said it assessed the hacking group APT42 to be operating on behalf of the Iranian government.</p> <p>"Mandiant assesses with high confidence that APT42 is a prolific and well-resourced threat actor that carries out Iranian state-sponsored espionage and surveillance activity in support of Iran's strategic priorities," Mandiant said in a new report Wednesday. "The group has been active since at least early 2015 and relies primarily on highly targeted social engineering efforts to achieve its objectives against both individuals and organizations of interest to the Iranian government."</p> <p>The hackers are skilled in stealing credentials for personal and corporate email accounts, surveilling through Android mobile malware and having the ability to create custom backdoors into a device.</p> <p>Mandiant said it has confirmed more than 30 operations using these tactics by the hackers since 2015. The cyber firm said it most recently detected malware used for surveillance and monitoring against targets between June and August of 2022.</p> <p>"APT42 has consistently targeted Western think tanks and academics, media organizations, members of the Iranian diaspora in the United Kingdom, Israel, the United States and high-profile Iranian individuals within Iran in efforts to collect credentials of individuals of interest to the Iranian government," the report said.</p> <p>The hackers have imitated prominent organizations to compromise people. In 2021, the hackers mimicked a Gmail login page to target a senior Israeli official and in 2017, the hackers sent links to fake Google Books pages that redirected people to sign-in pages where the hackers could steal their passwords.</p> <p>"In the weeks ahead of Iran's June 18, 2021, presidential election, APT42 used a compromised email address belonging to an Iran researcher at a U.S. think tank to spear phish a member of an Iranian opposition group headquartered in Europe in a probable attempt to gain access to the organization and its other members," the report said. "The group impersonated the researcher and invited the target to review and provide feedback on one of the researcher's articles on Iranian nuclear issues in a likely effort to build trust with the target before engaging in further conversation."</p> <p>While pinpointing precisely who was responsible for the hacks has proven difficult, Mandiant said it had moderate confidence that the hackers were working for the Intelligence Organization of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps based on the hackers' targeting pattern and longevity. The cyber firm also noted that the hackers appeared impervious to infrastructure takedowns intended to disrupt their work.</p>

	<p>Iran's recent cyberattacks have been felt around the world. Earlier this week, Albania cut diplomatic ties with Iran and expelled its embassy staff over a cyberattack allegedly conducted by Iran. The Biden administration condemned the attack on Wednesday.</p> <p>In the U.S., FBI Director Christopher A. Wray said in June that Iran-sponsored cyberattackers previously planned to hit Boston Children's Hospital but were stopped.</p>
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HEADLINE	09/09 China leap in chips faces US pushback
SOURCE	https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2022/9/9/china-great-leap-forward-in-chips-faces-us-pushback
GIST	<p>Taipei, Taiwan – China is facing a steeper climb to overtake the United States and its allies in semiconductors as Washington ramps up measures to restrict Beijing's ability to produce advanced chips and secure dominance over the strategic technology.</p> <p>Last week, Washington restricted the sale to China of select Nvidia and AMD advanced graphic processor units (GPUs) used in artificial intelligence applications and supercomputers.</p> <p>The move followed the US Commerce Department's announcement last month of a ban on exports to China of electronic design automation (EDA) software used in the production of next-generation chips.</p> <p>Meanwhile, Washington has been nudging East Asian partners Taiwan, South Korea, and Japan to form a "Chip 4" industry alliance to isolate China from the international tech ecosystem, and bolstered efforts to develop its homegrown industry with the passage of the CHIPS Act, offering \$52bn in subsidies to firms that make chips on US soil.</p> <p>"The US is trying to reinforce its central role in the world's semiconductor ecosystem and ensure that China is unable to produce the most cutting edge chips," Chris Miller, author of the upcoming book <i>Chip War: The Fight for the World's Most Critical Technology</i>, told Al Jazeera.</p> <p>"Control over semiconductors will not only shape the future of the world economy, from cloud computing to autonomous driving, they are also fundamental to military power."</p> <p>Semiconductors have emerged as one of the fiercest battlegrounds in the intense rivalry between the US and China. Beyond functioning as the lifeblood of the modern economy, powering everything from iPhones to fighter jets, the chips are seen as critical to unlocking the technological breakthroughs of the future, meaning tomorrow's global balance of power could rest on the wafer-thin chips being developed today.</p> <p>China, like other major economies, relies heavily on semiconductor production in Taiwan, the source of more than 90 percent of the global supply of high-end chips, but has recently made considerable strides in developing its domestic industry.</p> <p>In July, researchers at TechInsights reported that China's national champion Semiconductor Manufacturing International Corporation (SMIC) had likely acquired the ability to produce a 7-nanometre (nm) chip, signalling a big leap forward after years of struggling to advance beyond a 14nm node. Semiconductors are typically compared by the length of their transistor gates, with a smaller gate generally corresponding with greater processing power.</p> <p>Beijing-backed SMIC is now ramping up foundry capacity, with new plans for a fourth plant in the northern city Tianjin. SMIC did not respond to Al Jazeera's request for comment.</p> <p>"It's a massive breakthrough," Dylan Patel, an industry analyst and author of the newsletter <i>SemiAnalysis</i>, told Al Jazeera. "It's missing some features, but it's a fully functional node."</p> <p>"This is the first real sign they've broken through a supposedly insurmountable barrier. Now they need to incrementally improve the design and scale up the production to higher value chips."</p>

China has been blocked from acquiring the latest equipment for producing advanced chips — extreme ultraviolet (EUV) lithography machines — since leading Dutch manufacturer ASML was denied an export licence following US pressure on Amsterdam.

But Chinese firms can still use less efficient deep ultraviolet (DUV) lithography machines, which feature larger beam wavelengths typically used to etch patterns on less-advanced chips, to make high-end semiconductors.

Although Washington has flagged plans to expand its ban on chip-making equipment, China has been stocking up on ASML's DUV lithography machines, buying up 81 machines last year alone.

“SMIC can fabricate a 7nm process with DUV, perhaps producing it en masse, but that does not make it cost-effective,” Ray Yang, a consulting director at Taiwan's Industrial Technology Research Institute, told Al Jazeera.

“With DUV resolution, but you are pushing the technology to its limits,” Yang said, likening it to driving a consumer car at Formula 1 speeds.

“The yield rate is very low, therefore, it is not a cost-optimised solution for advanced processors and anything beyond 7nm is simply impossible.”

Yang said that SMIC could afford to use less profitable processes to produce advanced chips due to its state backing.

“Now that Huawei cannot use foreign foundries, China is heavily relying on SMIC for chips it urgently needs, likely for ‘special non-commercial uses,’” he said.

Those non-commercial uses include advanced weaponry for China's growing military.

The links between Huawei, one of China's biggest tech giants, and the Chinese military have been a longstanding concern for Washington, culminating in the Trump administration adding the company to the “Entity List” of sanctioned firms in 2019.

Under Chinese President Xi Jinping, leveraging private sector tech breakthroughs to bolster China's defence sector has become a national priority, with its Military-Civil Fusion Strategy becoming a pillar of industrial policy.

“Chips are crucial for smart weapons. This is one of the reasons many policymakers are so concerned about the development of China's semiconductor industry,” Douglas Fuller, an expert in technological development at the City University of Hong Kong, told Al Jazeera.

Although China is believed to still lack the technology to produce chips under 7nm, firms such as SMIC and Shanghai Micro Electronics Equipment Co are racing to develop their own indigenous machines to break the impasse.

“SMIC engineers have leaked complaints that those machines are prone to problems. China has not yet made a well-functioning ArF lithography machine,” Patel said, referring to a sub-type of DUV lithography machine.

“China is years behind in making chips with foreign tools, but decades behind with domestically-made tools.”

Chinese firms can also continue to design chips smaller than 7nm, even if they cannot necessarily produce them yet.

Last year, Alibaba unveiled one of China's most advanced designs, the Yitian 710 — a 5nm server chip built for a range of internet-of-things (IoT) applications.

Even so, Washington's latest restrictions are set to make the design phase for next-generation chips — those under 5nm — harder, too.

The next-gen chips are expected to rely on the emerging gate-all-around (GAA) design, which is widely considered a solution to the physical limitations of shrinking chips to infinitesimally smaller sizes.

"The ban impacts China's pipeline today, but won't hit their products and revenue for years to come since GAA will only be for 2nm nodes and under, which haven't arrived yet," said Patel, adding that 2nm nodes could make up half the output of the world's leading chipmaker, Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC), in the coming decades.

"It will be hard [for China] to sidestep these EDA suppliers," Patel said. "However, Cadence [a leading American EDA supplier] has joint ventures in China, and offers its design programs at a discount in China compared to US customers. So China could have some leverage over the firm there and exert pressure on them."

Yang said China would do all it could to procure necessary lithography equipment if it was prevented from purchasing it on the open market.

"This could entail reverse engineering, IP theft, or strategically acquiring foreign firms ... which has happened many times in the past with other critical technologies," he said.

China is also seeking breakthroughs by pouring resources into alternative materials to silicon, such as carbon. Beijing has included research on carbon fibre, graphene, silicon carbide, and other carbon-based composites in its 14th Five-Year Plan.

"It's a potential tech of the future, but it has yet to be proven at scale," Patel said. "You can make a super fast chip in a lab at crazy clock speeds, but making it on an economically feasible model is a whole other story."

"If it does turn out to be a technology of the future, China is marginally closer to the forefront. The gap it needs to close is comparatively smaller."

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Terrorism, Extremism

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HEADLINE	09/09 Self-professed 9/11 mastermind awaits trial
SOURCE	https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/2-decades-later-911-self-professed-mastermind-awaits-trial/2022/09/09/435365dc-2ff4-11ed-bcc6-0874b26ae296_story.html
GIST	<p>NEW YORK — Hours before dawn on March 1, 2003, the U.S. scored its most thrilling victory yet against the plotters of the Sept. 11 attacks — the capture of a disheveled Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, hauled away by intelligence agents from a hideout in Rawalpindi, Pakistan.</p> <p>The global manhunt for al-Qaida's No. 3 leader had taken 18 months. But America's attempt to bring him to justice, in a legal sense, has taken much, much longer. Critics say it has become one of the war on terror's greatest failures.</p> <p>As Sunday's 21st anniversary of the terror attacks approaches, Mohammed and four other men accused of 9/11-related crimes still sit in a U.S. detention center in Guantanamo Bay, their planned trials before a military tribunal endlessly postponed.</p>

The latest setback came last month when pretrial hearings scheduled for early fall were canceled. The delay was one more in a string of disappointments for relatives of the nearly 3,000 victims of the attack. They've long hoped that a trial would bring closure and perhaps resolve unanswered questions.

"Now, I'm not sure what's going to happen," said Gordon Haberman, whose 25-year-old daughter Andrea died after a hijacked plane crashed into the the World Trade Center, a floor above her office.

He's traveled to Guantanamo four times from his home in West Bend, Wisconsin, to watch the legal proceedings in person, only to leave frustrated.

"It's important to me that America finally gets to the truth about what happened, how it was done," said Haberman. "I personally want to see this go to trial."

If convicted at trial, Mohammed could face the death penalty.

When asked about the case, James Connell, an attorney for one of Mohammed's co-defendants — one accused of transferring money to 9/11 attackers — confirmed reports both sides are still "attempting to reach a pretrial agreement" that could still avoid a trial and result in lesser but still lengthy sentences.

David Kelley, a former U.S. attorney in New York who co-chaired the Justice Department's nationwide investigation into the attacks, called the delays and failure to prosecute "an awful tragedy for the families of the victims."

He called the effort to put Mohammed on trial before a military tribunal, rather than in the regular U.S. court system, "a tremendous failure" that was "as offensive to our Constitution as to our rule of law."

"It's a tremendous blemish on the country's history," he said.

The difficulty in holding a trial for Mohammed and other Guantanamo prisoners is partly rooted in what the U.S. did with him after his 2003 capture.

Mohammed and his co-defendants were initially held in secret prisons abroad. Hungry for information that might lead to the capture of other al-Qaida figures, CIA operatives subjected them to enhanced interrogation techniques that were tantamount to torture, human rights groups say. Mohammed was waterboarded — made to feel that he was drowning — 183 times.

A Senate investigation later concluded the interrogations didn't lead to any valuable intelligence. But it has sparked endless pretrial litigation over whether FBI reports on their statements can be used against them — a process not subject to speedy trial rules used in civilian courts.

The torture allegations led to concerns that the U.S. might have ruined its chance to put Mohammed on trial in a civilian court.

But in 2009, President Barack Obama's administration decided to try, announcing that Mohammed would be transferred to New York City and put on trial at a federal court in Manhattan.

"Failure is not an option," Obama said.

But New York City balked at the cost of security and the move never came. Eventually, it was announced Mohammed would face a military tribunal. And then over a dozen years passed.

Kelley said talk of military tribunals two decades ago surprised many in the legal community who had been successfully prosecuting terrorism cases in the decade before. The concept of a tribunal, he said, "came out of the blue. Nobody knew it was coming."

Then-Attorney General John Ashcroft was not in favor of tribunals and had been supportive of the Manhattan federal terrorism prosecutions, he said.

Now, Kelley said, with the passage of time it will be much more difficult to prosecute Mohammed in a tribunal, much less a courtroom. "Evidence goes stale, witness memories fail."

The passage of time hasn't dulled the memories of the victims' families or dampened their interest in witnessing justice.

Eddie Bracken's sister Lucy Fishman was killed at the trade center. The New Yorker opposed Obama's proposal to move the trial to federal court — Mohammed is charged with "a military act," and should be tried by the military, he reasoned. And while he is somewhat frustrated by the delays, he understands them.

"The whole world is looking at us and saying, 'What are they doing after all this time?'" he said. But he realizes the case is "a process that the world is seeing, that needs to be done under a microscope. ... It's up to the United States to do their due diligence, make sure it's done right."

"The wheels of justice turn. They turn slowly, but they turn. And when the time comes, and it's said and done, the world will know what happened," he adds.

While Mohammed has lingered at Guantanamo, the U.S. killed al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden in a 2011 raid and deputy-turned-successor Ayman al-Zawahri in a drone strike just this August.

Investigators with the military commission at Guantanamo Bay said he plotted the 9/11 attacks for three years. They cited a computer hard drive seized at his arrest which they said contained photographs of the 19 hijackers, three letters from bin Laden and information about some hijackers.

Mohammed, at his tribunal hearing, conceded in a written statement that he swore allegiance to Osama bin Laden, that he was on al-Qaida's council and that he served as operational director for bin Laden for the organizing, planning, follow-up and execution of the Sept. 11 plot "from A to Z."

According to the statement, he also took credit for the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center; an attempt to down U.S. jetliners using bombs hidden in shoes; the bombing of a nightclub in Indonesia; and plans for a second wave of attacks after the 2001 attacks targeting landmarks like the Sears Tower in Chicago and Manhattan's Empire State Building.

He also claimed credit for other planned attacks, including assassination attempts against then-President Bill Clinton in 1994 or 1995 and an assassination plot against Pope John Paul II at about the same time, the statement said.

Mohammed's nearly two decades in legal limbo differs from the fate of his nephew, Ramzi Yousef, the mastermind of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing that killed six people, injured 1,000 others and left a crater in the parking garage beneath the twin towers.

Yousef is serving life in prison after being convicted at two separate civilian trials. He was also captured in Pakistan, in 1995, but was brought to the United States for trial.

At the time, Yousef said his right to kill people was comparable to the U.S. decision to drop a nuclear bomb in World War II. Mohammed has offered a similar justification, saying through an interpreter at a Guantanamo proceeding that killing people was the "language of any war."

Bracken traveled to Guantanamo in 2012 to watch one hearing for Mohammed and his co-defendants, and would probably go again if a trial ever happened.

	<p>"I don't know if I want to go there again to bring back all the hurt and pain. But if I'm allowed to go, then I guess I would go. Yeah. My sister would do that for me."</p> <p>"She's that type of a woman," he added. Then he corrected himself: "She was that type of a woman."</p>
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HEADLINE	09/08 US sanctions Iranian drone makers
SOURCE	https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/us-sanctions-iranian-drone-makers
GIST	<p>The U.S. Treasury Department on Thursday levied sanctions against an Iranian company it accused of transporting drones to Russia and three other companies and an individual it said were involved in the production of drones.</p> <p>Russia has reportedly sought Iranian drones for use in Ukraine and has already deployed dozens on the battlefield, according to Ukrainian officials. The Treasury Department on Thursday accused Tehran-based company Safiran Airport Services of coordinating Russian military flights that transported drones between Iran and Russia.</p> <p>"Russia is making increasingly desperate choices to continue its unprovoked war against Ukraine, particularly in the face of our unprecedented sanctions and export controls," Under Secretary of the Treasury for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence, Brian E. Nelson, said in a statement.</p> <p>"The United States is committed to strictly enforcing our sanctions against both Russia and Iran and holding accountable Iran and those supporting Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine," Nelson's statement continued.</p> <p>Secretary of State Anthony Blinken said on Thursday that Russia is turning to Iran in a desperate attempt to procure military supplies because of supply shortages caused, in part, by U.S. sanctions.</p> <p>"The Russian military is suffering from major supply shortages in Ukraine, in part because of sanctions and export controls, forcing Russia to turn to unreliable countries like Iran for supplies and equipment," Blinken said in a statement.</p> <p>The Treasury Department also sanctioned the Paravar Pars Company, Design and Manufacturing of Aircraft Engines (DAMA), Baharestan Kish Company, and Rehmatollah Heidari, the Baharestan Kish Company's managing director, accusing them of overseeing drone-related projects for Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps.</p> <p>The Treasury Department accused the Paravar Pars Company of reverse engineering and reproducing U.S. and Israeli-made drones captured by the IRGC.</p> <p>The IRGC is designated as a terrorist entity by the U.S. government.</p> <p>"We will also not hesitate to target producers and procurers who contribute to Iran and its IRGC's UAV program, further demonstrating our resolve to continue going after terrorist proxies that destabilize the Middle East," Nelson said. "Non-Iranian, non-Russian entities should also exercise great caution to avoid supporting either the development of Iranian UAVs or their transfer, or sale of any military equipment to Russia for use against Ukraine."</p>
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HEADLINE	09/09 LNA claims killing terrorist mastermind
SOURCE	https://www.einnews.com/pr_news/590027165/libyan-national-army-kills-terrorist-behind-mass-beheading-of-christians
GIST	<p>WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, September 9, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Libyan National Army (LNA) headed by Field Marshall Khalifa Haftar announced it has successfully completed an operation to kill or capture the jihadist mastermind of the mass beheading of 20 Egyptian</p>

Coptic Christian workers and one Ghanaian Christian whom the jihadists had kidnapped in the Libyan city of Sirte on February 15, 2015.

After the beheadings, jihadist Al Qaeda's Ben Omro pointed his bloody knife toward the sea and declared: "We will conquer Rome, by Allah's permission."

After the fall of Gaddafi in 2011, Libya was invaded by jihadists and Muslim Brotherhood militias. The regular Libyan army was disbanded and the radicals took over. In September 2012, one of their attacks [killed the United States Ambassador to Libya](#) J. Christopher Stevens and U.S. Foreign Service Information Management Officer Sean Smith as well as two CIA contractors trying to defend them in Benghazi.

Field Marshall Haftar's Libyan National Army [liberated Benghazi](#) and all the areas east to the Egyptian border, pushing the jihadist forces west toward Tripoli.

In southern Libya, the mastermind of the mass beheading of the helpless Christian men, bearing the nom de guerre "al Mahdi Denqo," was surrounded by an LNA counter-terrorism unit. He was ordered to surrender but resisted and was killed along with two more jihadist associates affiliated to the Islamic state militant group (IS) in Libya, according to LNA spokesperson Ahmed Al-Mesmari.

"This is a great day for Middle Eastern Christians and for Christians all over the world," said AMCD co-chair, Tom Harb. "Christians are being persecuted and killed for their faith in numbers not seen since Roman times. At least in this instance, thanks to General Haftar and the LNA, there is a measure of justice, and the families may find some peace."

"It also demonstrates why General Haftar deserves Western support," added AMCD co-chair John Hajjar. "His goal is to protect minorities from the jihadists who would exterminate or drive them out of Libya. The justice of his cause is clear."

The chairman of the committee on defense and security of the Libyan Parliament, Libya, praised the LNA operation and compared it to US forces eliminating the head of ISIS, Abu Bakr al Baghdadi, a few years ago: "The Libyan Arab forces, led by Field Marshall Khalifa Hifter, are going after the terrorists across the Libyan territories to eliminate them. Our elected parliament appointed FM Hifter in 2014 to rid the country of the terror forces which have been attacking Libyans, Arabs, and Westerners on our soil. This operation is a just response to the massacre of our Egyptian innocent brothers who were working in Libya to feed their families and were targeted by these monsters. The LNA will continue to fight these radicals, and along with the counter-terrorism forces of the Arab Coalition and our friends in the US, Europe and the rest of the world, we will defeat this terror threat."

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HEADLINE	09/09 BP nabbed 66 on watchlist at border 2022
SOURCE	https://cis.org/Arthur/66-Aliens-Terrorist-Watchlist-Nabbed-Southwest-Border
GIST	<p>The latest CBP statistics reveal that Border Patrol agents at the Southwest border have apprehended 66 illegal entrants on the terrorist watchlist in the first 10 months of FY 2022 — more than doubling the total of such apprehensions in the last five fiscal years. That comes as the Office of Inspector General (OIG) at DHS — that department's watchdog — found that Afghan nationals who "pose a risk to national security and the safety of local communities" may have been released into the United States during our evacuation efforts from that country. Welcome to Joe Biden's new pre-September 11th world.</p> <p>Terrorist Watchlist Apprehensions Soar. Among the enforcement statistics CBP publishes monthly are what it terms "Terrorist Screening Dataset Encounters".</p> <p>Those statistics reveal that between October 2021 and August 2022, Border Patrol agents at the Southwest border apprehended 66 aliens whose identities appear in the "Terrorist Screening Dataset (TSDS)" — aka: the "watchlist" — described as "the U.S. government's database that contains sensitive information on terrorist identities".</p>

Either dryly or innocently (or both), CBP asserts that “Encounters of watchlisted individuals at our borders are very uncommon, underscoring the critical work CBP Agents and Officers carry out every day on the frontlines.” While it’s a relief that agents are not nabbing known or suspected terrorists on an hourly basis, that sort of misses the point.

[Nineteen](#) foreign nationals (none of whom, to be fair, crossed the border illegally), carried out the four individual but coordinated terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, a singular event that claimed [thousands](#) of lives, resulted in [billions](#) of dollars in damages and losses, and changed the country and Americans’ lives forever.

That “underscores” the danger that even a few misguided foreign nationals bent on destruction pose to the United States and its institutions. Regrettably, CBP’s statistics suggest that there are more than a few who are trying to follow those 19 hijackers.

To put those 66 watchlist apprehensions into context, Border Patrol agents at the U.S.-Mexico line have stopped more than twice as many known or suspected terrorists in just the 10 months ended August 31 than they did in the prior five fiscal years *combined* (26 total TSDS apprehensions).

That’s not the worst part, however, because while Border Patrol agents have been dealing with those individuals, the number of known or suspected terrorists who have been stopped by their colleagues at the Southwest border ports of entry has dropped significantly.

Through the end of August, CBP officers at those ports have encountered 60 individuals on the TSDS in FY 2022. That may or may not include U.S. citizens (who can also be stopped at the ports), but notably it puts those officers on pace to encounter 72 people with TSDS “hits” this fiscal year, well below their watchlist total for FY 2021 (103), FY 2019 (280), FY 2018 (155), or FY 2017 (116).

That would equal the number of known or suspected terrorists stopped at our Mexican border ports in FY 2021 (again, 72), but it’s important to remember those ports weren’t screening many travelers from late March 2021 on, due to Covid-19 pandemic-related travel [restrictions](#).

If Border Patrol is apprehending a record number of suspected terrorists, isn’t that good? No, actually — it’s a bad omen. Historically, alien terrorists have entered legally through the ports (generally through subterfuge and fraud) because experience has shown it’s the easiest way to avoid detection at entry.

Illegal entry across the border, on the other hand, carries a much higher risk of detection because agents are going to thoroughly question, search, and vet every alien who avoids the ports on the way in. Well, everyone they catch at least.

The problem is that Border Patrol agents are currently *so* swamped transporting, processing, and caring for aliens who are turning themselves in (in the reasonable expectation of release into this country), that they are increasingly incapable of catching aliens seeking to evade detection and capture. A [half-million](#) such “got-aways” have successfully entered this fiscal year alone.

And, logically, every alien on the watchlist is seeking to evade detection and capture.

As a former INS terrorist prosecutor, acting head of the agency’s National Security Law Division, and staff director of the House national security subcommittee, I have some professional experience in terrorist travel patterns. If I were a terrorist or terrorist organizer, illicit travel across the depleted border would be the path I would follow into the country.

You don’t have to believe me, however.

Biden’s original Border Patrol chief, Rodney Scott, made similar points in a [letter](#) that he sent to Senate leadership on September 11, 2021. Rhetorically, Scott asked if “[l]ow level, unsophisticated and

uneducated smugglers are illegally crossing the border and increasingly evading apprehension daily”, why wouldn’t “well-resourced terrorist networks, criminal organizations, and hostile nations” not be “doing the same”? Why not, indeed.

DHS OIG Report. On [September 6](#), DHS OIG issued a report captioned “DHS Encountered Obstacles to Screen, Vet, and Inspect All Evacuees during the Recent Afghanistan Crisis”. That report followed a [similar one](#) issued by the Department of Defense (DoD) OIG during the winter, which I analyzed in [February](#).

By way of brief background, prior to the disastrous and chaotic retreat of U.S. forces from Afghanistan in August 2021, the administration launched an initiative called “Operation Allies Refuge” (OAR), headed by the State Department, to assist in the relocation of what the DHS OIG termed “interested Afghan nationals and their immediate family members in the Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) application pipeline”.

The fall of the Afghan capital of Kabul on August 15, 2021, prompted DoD to accelerate the evacuation of Afghan nationals to third-country facilities known as “lily pads” in the Middle East and Europe. Those lily pads provided the U.S. government with the opportunity to vet and screen those individuals before their onward transit to the United States.

The day Kabul capitulated, President Biden tapped DHS to spearhead the resettlement of Afghans in the United States, “Operation Allies Welcome” (OAW). During OAW (and in an epic stretch of its statutory authority), DHS paroled tens of thousands of Afghan evacuees into this country.

Every arriving Afghan parolee was supposed to be screened, vetted, and inspected before being released into the United States. Once they were inspected at a U.S. port of entry, they were either released or housed in “safe havens” where they were processed by USCIS and received additional security screenings.

That’s how it was supposed to work. The OIG concluded, however, that CBP sometimes lacked “critical data” (like names and dates of birth) “to properly screen, vet, or inspect Afghan evacuees”, and worse, “admitted or paroled evacuees who were not fully vetted into the United States”.

Consequently, the OIG found, “DHS paroled at least two individuals into the United States who posed a risk to national security and the safety of local communities and may have admitted or paroled more individuals of concern.”

There are any number of screening and vetting failures in that report, and while some of them are interesting, many are technical and procedural. None of this had to happen, however, because in a post-9/11 world, things should not have been done this way.

I certainly understand the instinct to bring as many Afghan nationals who were subject to retribution by the Taliban for having worked with the United States out of harm’s way as possible, but that does not mean that the Biden administration had to parole into the United States more than 72,500 of the ones who were otherwise inadmissible.

In most conflicts, such individuals are relocated to third-country refugee camps — usually close to their home country — where they can be housed, fed, cared for, and educated while they are being sorted out and (if lucky) granted refugee status abroad.

Some of the screening and vetting issues the OIG identified related to the fact that DHS was working on tight time constraints to move individuals through those lily pads, from between 30 days in Qatar (jumping off point for more than 10,000 evacuees to this country) to just 10 days in Germany (which accounted for an additional 41,000-plus evacuees). That was a self-inflicted wound.

Once those individuals were in refugee camps and out of harm’s way in Afghanistan, DHS could have marshaled the necessary resources and implemented sane procedures and policies to avoid the “issues”

identified in the OIG report. Simply put, nothing said it had to be done this way, and there is no reason it should have been.

That is especially true given the fact that Afghanistan is not only a country of [terrorist concern](#), but also the place where the 9/11 attacks were planned and from which they were carried out. Respectfully, the president should have remembered *why* we were there to begin with.

“Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States”. Biden and every person involved in both this mess and the disaster at the Southwest border should be forced to read all 597 pages of the “Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States”, better known as the “9/11 Report”, issued in [July 2004](#).

It details the crucial role border security plays in protecting our national security, explains why properly vetting foreign nationals before they arrive here is vital to protecting our homeland, and “underscores” the crucial role proper, verifiable documentation plays in identifying and stopping terrorists before they can act.

It is sadly and bitterly ironic that the 9/11 Commission explained: “In the decade before September 11, 2001, border security — encompassing travel, entry, and immigration — was not seen as a national security matter.” Thanks to the Biden administration and its immigration and border policies, we are back to living in that pre-9/11 world. Only luck has kept us safe this long.

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HEADLINE	09/08 UN Global Congress Victims of Terrorism
SOURCE	https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/09/1126241
GIST	<p>The first UN Global Congress of Victims of Terrorism will address key issues that include protection, remembrance and recognition, and access to justice, as well as support and assistance.</p> <p>More than 600 participants are expected to attend, both in-person and online, including survivors, diplomats, experts and representatives from civil society, academia, and the private sector.</p> <p>Owning the narrative</p> <p>Terrorism can affect everyone, said Vladimir Voronkov, head of the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), who delivered the opening remarks.</p> <p>“The Global Congress is our chance to take away the narrative from terrorists and violent extremists and return it to victims and survivors,” he stated.</p> <p>Mr. Voronkov outlined a three-pronged approach to scale-up support to victims, starting with putting them first and being mindful of their interests.</p> <p>He also stressed the need to ensure that victims receive comprehensive support, which was among the messages that emerged from a conference held earlier this year in Málaga, Spain, that examined human rights, civil society and counter-terrorism.</p> <p>‘Rise to the challenge’</p> <p>“Going forward, we need to ensure that Member States can meet the physical, medical and psychosocial needs of victims, and their human rights recognized and protected. We need to recognize our obligations in this regard and rise to the challenge,” he said.</p> <p>Countries should also strengthen commitments at the national level, including through establishing and boosting legislative frameworks that protect and promote the rights of victims.</p> <p>Greater commitment is also needed at the international level, he added.</p>

“Having recently commemorated the fifth [International Day of Remembrance of and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism](#), our resolve must continue to be translated into concrete action. Gatherings such as this Congress, continue to galvanize us to do more.”

Solidarity and support

In her keynote address, UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed underlined the need to stand with victims and survivors.

“Solidarity and support for victims of terrorism is **a moral obligation and a humanitarian and human rights imperative**,” she said.

“But let’s be clear: today’s Congress is not only to benefit victims. It is an essential part of our efforts to prevent and end terrorism everywhere. Amplifying the voices and views of victims and survivors is the ultimate demonstration that the terrorists will never prevail.”

The President of the 76th UN General Assembly, Abdulla Shahid, also delivered remarks to the gathering. “It is our duty, not only as members of an international organization, but as fellow human beings, to stand in solidarity with the victims of terrorism. We must **raise awareness of their needs**, and do our utmost to guarantee the protection, promotion and respect of their rights,” he said.

Victims’ call to action

During the opening ceremony, 10 people from across the world spoke of how their lives have been marred by terrorism.

In sharing their painful stories, these victims and survivors issued a call to action, expressing what they hoped the Congress will achieve.

For Ana Evans, a mother of three from Argentina, life “froze” on 1 October 2017, the day her husband and several of his friends were killed while on vacation in New York City.

A ‘very difficult decision’

The men were riding bicycles along a popular riverside path when a terrorist drove a truck into them.

“I took the very difficult decision to travel to New York, where my husband was killed, in order to be a part of this Congress and to ask you, the international community, to do something on behalf of my children, and **on behalf of all the children and families that are affected by terrorism**,” she said, speaking through an interpreter.

Ms. Evans appealed for access to justice, compensation, and spaces to commemorate those who were killed.

The day ‘everything changed’

Ashraf Al-Khaled from Jordan got married on 9 November 2005, which was supposed to be the happiest day of his life.

However, “everything changed” that evening when three hotels in the capital, Amman, were bombed, including the one where his wedding reception was being held. The blast robbed him of his father, parents-in-law, and 24 other relatives.

Mr. Al-Khaled said he was at the UN in 2008 for a symposium on supporting victims of terrorism. Although some progress has occurred since then, he stressed the need to do more.

“Our needs and rights are different, and they must be upheld in different ways. We need tailored be it financial support, or medical attention, or even psychological support,” he said.

	“We stand in front of you, united as victims of terror from different countries and backgrounds, and cultures. Yet, we are united in our pain, and we are united in our humanity as brothers and sisters on this planet. Please join our movement so we can make sure that our children do not have to face what we have faced in the past.”
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HEADLINE	09/08 Sovereign citizens anti-govt extremists
SOURCE	https://www.goskagit.com/news/nation/what-are-sovereign-citizens-and-what-do-they-believe/article_50a92c9a-0fd0-5262-8721-074f7707a9cf.html
GIST	<p>The FBI considers sovereign citizens an anti-government extremist movement.</p> <p>Sovereign citizens believe the U.S. government is illegitimate and actually a corporation that secretly sold bonds using citizens as collateral. There are variations, but followers generally believe the people are creditors who have a right to collect from the government and don't have to follow its laws.</p> <p>Sovereign citizen ideology, tinged with antisemitism, teaches that a shadowy group secretly took over the U.S. government during the 19th century and has been using financial contracts to enslave Americans. Some followers have resorted to violence – even the murder of law enforcement officers. That is rare, although adherents are known to escalate police traffic stops, sometimes ending in scuffles and arrest.</p> <p>When did sovereign citizens beliefs become popular?</p> <p>Sovereign citizen ideology dates back to the 1970s when it was first dreamed up by white supremacists intent on defying the nation's laws. And it doesn't appear to be slowing down. In this era of rampant conspiracy mongering, sovereign citizens once dismissed as fringe actors have found a growing audience.</p> <p>Multiple offshoots have sprouted online, finding acceptance among pushers of other paranoid imaginings, like the QAnon belief in elite cabals secretly running the world while sex trafficking children. Because some QAnon followers also question the legitimacy of the government, they are particularly receptive to sovereign citizen ideas, experts say.</p> <p>“We're in a strange period where you're seeing a lot of crossover with some of these extreme ideologies,” said Freddy Cruz, a research analyst with the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) who specializes in anti-government extremism. “You have people becoming more and more radicalized.”</p> <p>How are the beliefs of sovereign citizens spreading?</p> <p>Black Americans are increasingly adopting sovereign principles to air grievances against the government and law enforcement. The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) has reported that the movement's biggest gains have occurred among Black Americans, some of whom identify as Moorish sovereign citizens, or Moors, who insist they were America's first inhabitants.</p> <p>Cruz said the movement's tenants provide “simple solutions to harsh realities.” Such ideas appeal to the desperate during major economic downturns, he said. But it's also “sucking people into this world of conspiracy theories and falsehoods,” he said.</p> <p>Cruz said some Jan. 6 insurrectionists also have picked up elements of the sovereigns' anti-government ideology, which typically gains ground during periods of financial insecurity and political instability.</p> <p>How many sovereign citizens are there?</p> <p>Groups that track extremism like the ADL and SPLC say they have noticed an increase in sovereign citizen activity. Estimates put their numbers at between 300,000 and 500,000. But the movement has no leadership hierarchy or organizational structure, and official statistics are unavailable and possibly unattainable.</p>

HEADLINE	09/08 FBI: soldier linked to online extremism
SOURCE	https://www.seattlepi.com/news/article/FBI-Soldier-linked-to-racist-post-online-17428736.php
GIST	<p>A soldier in the U.S. Army wrote on Instagram that he joined the military “for combat experience so I’m more proficient in killing” Black people, investigators say.</p> <p>Killian Mackeithan Ryan also had five Instagram accounts that were in contact with others “associated with racially motivated extremism,” according to court records.</p> <p>Ryan’s alleged social media activity is documented in a case filed late last month in U.S. District Court in North Carolina that accuses him of providing false information on a security clearance form to serve at Fort Bragg.</p> <p>The case was first reported by Rolling Stone and comes at a time when the U.S. military is trying to purge its ranks of extremists and white supremacists.</p> <p>For example, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin directed commanding officers last year to institute a one-day stand-down to address extremism. The military also updated its social media policy where liking and reposting certain content could result in disciplinary action.</p> <p>And just this week, the names of more than 100 current military members appeared on the leaked membership rolls of a far-right extremist group that’s accused of playing a key role in last year’s insurrection at the U.S. Capitol.</p> <p>Ryan is accused of claiming on the security clearance form that he wasn’t in contact with his biological father for more than 10 years, according to court records. He also said that his biological father wasn’t listed on his birth certificate.</p> <p>Ryan’s biological father is a convicted felon with a criminal history in Washington state and California for drug violations and auto theft, according to court records.</p> <p>Ryan was investigated by a police officer in Fayetteville, North Carolina, who works as part of the FBI’s Joint Terrorism Task Force.</p> <p>Ryan served in the regular Army at Fort Bragg until his arrest by the FBI on Aug. 26 and “was separated for serious misconduct,” U.S. Army officials said in a statement.</p> <p>The statement did not elaborate on what the misconduct was. Ryan was also charged with driving under the influence at Fort Bragg in July, according to court documents.</p> <p>The Army said the FBI informed it earlier this year that Ryan was under investigation.</p> <p>“The U.S. Army does not tolerate racism, extremism or hatred in our ranks,” its statement said.</p> <p>Ryan served as a fire support specialist, which is someone who gathers intelligence on enemy targets for artillery forces. The Army said he had no deployments.</p> <p>For one of his Instagram accounts, Ryan used an email that contained the name “naziace1488,” according to court records.</p> <p>According to the Anti-Defamation League, 1488 is a combination of numeric symbols that are popular among white supremacists.</p>

	<p>The first is the number 14, which is shorthand for a 14-word slogan about the "future for white children," the ADL said. The second is 88, which stands for "Heil Hitler" because H is the 8th letter of the alphabet, the ADL said.</p> <p>Ryan was in touch with his biological father through Instagram, court records stated. His father also posted a photo of the two at Ryan's high school graduation in 2019.</p> <p>Legal experts say that Ryan could have jeopardized his security clearance if he listed recent contact with his biological father.</p> <p>"They're looking at the potential for you to be compromised in any way because of your personal situation," said Colby Vokey, a military criminal defense lawyer.</p> <p>Ryan would have needed clearance to work with intelligence on enemy positions as well as information about U.S. weapons systems, Vokey added.</p> <p>Phillip Stackhouse, another military criminal defense lawyer, said prosecuting someone for providing false information on a security clearance form is not routine in his experience. Many people often just have their clearance revoked without being charged.</p> <p>"Maybe they're going to make an example of him," Stackhouse said of Ryan. "Maybe it's to apply pressure on him to cooperate in some other investigation."</p> <p>Ryan's federal public defender, James E. Todd , Jr., did not immediately respond to an email from The Associated Press seeking comment.</p>
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HEADLINE	09/09 Turkey: senior IS militant captured
SOURCE	https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/erdogan-senior-militant-captured-turkey-89579569
GIST	<p>ANKARA, Turkey -- Turkish police and intelligence have captured a senior member of the Islamic State group, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has announced.</p> <p>Erdogan identified the captured operative as Bashar Hattab Ghazal Al Sumaidai and said he was known by his code name Abu Zeyd.</p> <p>The militant was seized in a joint operation carried out by police and the Turkish intelligence agency who were monitoring his connections in Syria and Istanbul and had received intelligence that he would enter Turkey illegally, Erdogan said.</p> <p>Erdogan did not say when he was captured.</p> <p>The Turkish leader made the announcement late on Thursday on his return from a three-day tour of Balkan countries. His comments were reported by the state-run Anadolu Agency.</p> <p>The militant was handed over to the judicial authorities following his interrogation by police and intelligence officials, Erdogan said.</p>
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Suspicious, Unusual

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HEADLINE	09/08 West heatwave breaks September records
SOURCE	https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2022/09/08/western-heatwave-records-california-climate/

The heat wave that's been gripping California and other parts of the West for 10 days and counting is the most severe ever recorded in September, weather experts have said — confirming what California's governor is calling the “hottest and longest on record” for the month.

The data supporting the assertion is overwhelming. Records began falling on Aug. 30 when Seattle and Portland set calendar day records of 90 and 100. And it's not yet over — while the region's heat wave peaked on Tuesday, it's expected to continue until Saturday, ending after a total of 12 days.

In just the past week, nearly [1,000 heat records have been broken](#), including more than 270 monthly records. Some places, like Salt Lake City, Sacramento and Reno, Nev., have broken their September records multiple times and by large margins.

Sacramento and San Jose, where it reached 116 and 109 degrees on Tuesday, clinched all-time records — meaning their temperatures exceeded levels observed on any previous day or month.

It's the “greatest September heat wave ever west of the Rockies hands down,” [tweeted weather historian Maximiliano Herrera on Wednesday](#).

In addition to its magnitude and duration, the heat wave has also been exceptional for its scope. Record-shattering temperatures have stretched from Arizona to Washington state and as far east as North Dakota.

At least two states have posted their highest temperatures ever observed during September:

- Utah: St. George, in the southwest corner of the state, hit 112 degrees Tuesday.
- Montana: Big Horn hit [108 Wednesday](#).

When Death Valley soared to 125 degrees Tuesday, it fell just one degree shy of the September California and world records.

Of all the states, California has seen the most extreme temperatures for the longest period of time. Sacramento, Death Valley, Stockton and Fresno all saw their warmest 7-day periods in September “[by far](#)” according to an analysis by weather enthusiast Don Sutherland.

At the heat wave's peak on Tuesday, California Gov. Gavin Newsom (D) called it “unprecedented,” [tweeting](#) that it “will be the hottest and longest on record for September.”

Experts concurred.

“This will be essentially the worst September heat wave on record, certainly in Northern California and arguably for the state overall,” said Daniel Swain, a climate scientist at UCLA, in a live discussion on Twitter.

Christopher Burt, author of [a book on weather extremes](#), called Tuesday “one of the, if not the, hottest single day in California's observed weather history.” That day, California's power demand spiked to an all-time high.

Although the heat wave is slowly easing, it is still setting records. The National Weather Service [projects about a dozen](#) more will be broken or tied through Saturday. Excessive heat warnings and heat advisories are still in place for about 30 million people in California.

This is exactly the kind of heat wave that is expected to become more common because of human-caused climate change, which has already made such events more intense, frequent and prolonged.

Rundown of key records

Below we list some of the most significant heat records set since the heat wave began:

- Denver set calendar day record highs of 99 degrees on both [Wednesday](#) and [Thursday](#) and 98 degrees on Tuesday, nearly notching its latest 100-degree reading on record. In June, it matched its earliest 100-degree reading.
- Salt Lake City tied its all-time high of 107 on Wednesday. It broke its previous September record high five times in seven days. Before hitting 107 on Wednesday, it hit [105 on Tuesday](#), [104 on Monday](#), 103 Saturday and 102 Thursday. The previous monthly record was 100. It has hit at least 100 degrees seven times this month. Before 2022, it [had only done so three times](#) during September dating to 1928.
- Several locations in the Mountain West set September record highs on Wednesday: Glasgow, Mont. (106); Sheridan, Wyo. (104); Boise, Idaho (104); Bowman, N.D. (102, tie); Helena, Mont. (102); and Cheyenne, Wyo. (97).
- Downtown Sacramento set an all-time high of 116 degrees on Tuesday, surpassing the previous mark of 114 from July 17, 1925. Records there date back to 1877. Stockton, Calif., tied its all-time high of 115.
- Death Valley hit 125 degrees Tuesday, tying its September record high and missing the September world record by just 1 degree. On Saturday, the low temperature in Death Valley of 102 degrees tied the highest minimum temperature ever recorded worldwide during September. It topped 120 degrees on nine straight days, setting calendar day records of 123 on Aug. 31, 124 on Thursday, 124 on Friday, 122 on Saturday, 124 on Sunday, 125 on Tuesday and 122 on Wednesday. It has established [a new September record](#) for most days reaching at least 120.
- San Jose set an all-time record of 109 degrees Tuesday. King City (116), Santa Rosa (115), Napa (114) and Redwood City (110, tie) also set all-time highs, according to the Weather Service office serving the Bay Area.
- Ukiah, Calif., about 100 miles north of San Francisco, tied an all-time high of 117 degrees Tuesday.
- Bakersfield, Calif., hit 115 Tuesday, tying its September record high. Other September highs set Tuesday include Vacaville (115, tying Monday), Marysville (115), Hanford (114), Fresno (114) and Modesto (111).
- Reno, Nev., set a September record high of 106 on Tuesday, beating the previous record of 104 set Sunday, after tying the previous monthly mark of 102 on Friday.
- Grand Junction, Colo., set [a September record high of 101 Tuesday](#).
- Fairfield, Calif., about 40 miles northeast of San Francisco, set an all-time high of 117 degrees Monday — three degrees above the previous record. Livermore [set an all-time high of 116](#) on Monday which it matched on Tuesday.
- San Diego tied its all-time warmest low temperature on record Sunday, falling to just 78 degrees.
- Burbank, Calif., matched its all-time warmest low temperature on Sunday, only dropping to 82 degrees. On Wednesday, it [set an August record high temperature of 112](#).
- Las Vegas set a September record high minimum temperature of 87 on Sunday.
- Casper, Wyo., set a September record high of 100 Sunday.
- On Saturday, many locations in the Mountain West set September record highs, including Bozeman (100) and Butte (96) in Montana and Pocatello (102) and Idaho Falls (99) in Idaho.
- The heat even surged into western Canada on Friday, where the village of Lytton set a September record for British Columbia of [103.3 degrees \(39.6 Celsius\)](#).
- Redmond, Ore., set a September record high of 106 on Friday.

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HEADLINE	09/08 Europe hottest summer recorded history
SOURCE	https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2022/09/08/europe-record-hot-summer-extreme-heat/
GIST	<p>Amid blistering heat waves, brutal drought and widespread wildfires, Europe just notched its hottest summer in recorded history, new data from the Copernicus Climate Change Service shows.</p> <p>It was the second historic summer in a row for the continent, with average temperatures 0.4 degrees Celsius (0.72 degrees Fahrenheit) higher than the previous record set just last year, Copernicus announced Thursday. August was especially scorching, surpassing the 2018 record by a whopping 0.8 degrees Celsius (1.44 degrees Fahrenheit).</p>

In a statement, Copernicus senior scientist Freja Vamborg described the past three months as “a summer of extremes.”

The combination of record temperatures and extraordinarily dry conditions fueled by climate change wreaked havoc across the continent, she said. Officials have attributed thousands of deaths to the long stretches of oppressively hot weather. Crops withered and forests turned brown and barren, as Western Europe was gripped by the worst drought in centuries. Wildfires raged from the Caucasus Mountains to the Atlantic coast, with flames consuming [roughly 50 percent more land](#) than the previous record set in 2017.

The historic season was made worse by human-caused warming, scientists say. One recent analysis [found](#) that the burning of fossil fuels and other carbon-emitting activities made a July heat wave in Britain 10 times as likely. Other research shows that the climate-driven cycle of hot weather and dry landscapes can [lead to the formation of “heat domes”](#) that deflect rainy weather and force the continent to bake beneath inescapable sunshine and heat.

“We expect these kinds of hot extremes to become more frequent and severe because of climate change,” Carlo Buontempo, director of the Copernicus service, wrote in an email. “Trends in this direction are clearly visible in the observational records.”

Globally, temperatures in August tied for the third hottest on record, Copernicus said. Heat waves scorched much of China, making this summer the nation’s hottest. Drought plagued the Western United States and Canada. Even the south pole was warmer than is usual for this period; the extent of sea ice around Antarctica hit a [record low](#) for July.

Human greenhouse gas pollution is heating the planet at a pace unparalleled since before the fall of the Roman Empire, according to the [U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change](#). Global average temperatures are now at least 1.1 degrees Celsius (2 degrees Fahrenheit) higher than before the Industrial Era began.

Each of the past seven years [ranks among the seven warmest on record](#); even natural fluctuations, such the current cooling weather pattern in the Pacific Ocean, cannot reverse the relentless man-made warming trend.

In the Northern Hemisphere, the dangers of climate change become [starkest in summertime](#). From U.S. national parks to cobblestone streets of French villages, steadily rising temperatures have turned what is often a time of joy into a season of disaster.

During the celebrated Tour de France, when the world’s top cyclists spend three weeks pedaling from the Belgian border through the Alps, past the shores of the Mediterranean to the streets of Paris, organizers had to [spray the roads with water](#) to keep them from melting.

Torrential rainfall in Yellowstone — made more likely by a warmer atmosphere that can hold more water — [flooded one of the park’s main roads](#) and devastated surrounding economies.

In China, a heat wave lasting more than [10 weeks](#) shuttered factories and forced cuts to electricity. At least eight people were killed in Seoul when the South Korean capital was deluged by [record-shattering storms](#). And [water shortages in Northern Mexico have become so intense](#) that people have sabotaged pipes and kidnapped truck drivers just to find something to drink.

Many parts of the world have also suffered from violent weather whiplash, as climate change disrupts usual seasonal patterns and makes weather less predictable. After experiencing some of the worst droughts in history this summer, southwest U.S. communities including Dallas and Death Valley endured record-shattering rainfall that swept away hikers and obliterated roads.

	<p>In Pakistan, one of the most prolonged and severe heat waves ever documented was followed by an abnormally cool and exceptionally wet monsoon season; by late August, roughly one-third of the country was underwater and millions had been displaced from their homes.</p> <p>“Whiplash events have always happened, but now we’re seeing the flips from one weather regime to another become more violent and disruptive,” Jennifer Francis, a senior scientist at Woodwell Climate Research Center, told The Washington Post last month. She called it “yet another clear signal that the climate crisis is with us now.”</p>
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HEADLINE	09/08 Study: ‘tipping points’ close to triggering
SOURCE	https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/science/study-four-major-climate-tipping-points-close-to-triggering/
GIST	<p>Even if the world somehow manages to limit future warming to the strictest international temperature goal, four Earth-changing climate “tipping points” are still likely to be triggered with a lot more looming as the planet heats more after that, a new study said.</p> <p>An international team of scientists looked at 16 climate tipping points — when a warming side effect is irreversible, self-perpetuating and major — and calculated rough temperature thresholds at which they are triggered. None of them are considered likely at current temperatures, though a few are possible. But with only a few more tenths of a degree of warming from now, at 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) warming since pre-industrial times, four move into the likely range, according to a study in Thursday’s journal Science.</p> <p>The study said slow but irreversible collapse of the Greenland and West Antarctic ice sheets, more immediate loss of tropical coral reefs around the globe and thawing of high northern permafrost that releases massive amounts of greenhouse gases trapped in now frozen land are four significant tipping points that could be triggered at 1.5 degrees Celsius of warming, which is three-tenths of a degree (half a degree Fahrenheit) warmer than now. Current policies and actions put Earth on a trajectory for about 2.7 degrees Celsius (4.9 degrees Fahrenheit) of warming since pre-industrial times, according to some projections.</p> <p>“Let’s hope we’re not right,” said study co-author Tim Lenton, an Earth systems scientist at the University of Exeter in the United Kingdom. “There’s a distinct chance some of these tipping points are going to be unavoidable. And therefore it’s really important we do some more thinking about how we’re going to adapt to the consequences.”</p> <p>Timing is a key issue for tipping points in two ways: when they become triggered and when they cause harm. And in many cases, such as ice sheet collapses, they could be triggered soon but their impacts even though inevitable take centuries to play out, scientists said. A few, such as the loss of coral reefs, cause more harm in only a decade or two.</p> <p>“It’s a future generation issue,” said study lead author David Armstrong McKay, a University of Exeter Earth systems scientist. “That ice sheets collapsing is kind of that thousand-year timescale, but it’s still bequeathing an entirely different planet to our descendants.”</p> <p>The concept of tipping points have been around for more than a decade but this study goes further looking at temperature thresholds for when they may be triggered and what impacts they would have on people and Earth and in the past 15 years or so “the risk levels just keep going up,” Lenton said.</p> <p>Lenton likes to think of tipping points like someone leaning back on a folding chair.</p> <p>“When you start tipping over backwards you have in that case a very simple kind of feedback on the forces of gravity operating on propelling you backwards until SPLAT,” Lenton said.</p>

Study co-author Johan Rockstrom, director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research in Germany, likened it to someone lighting a fuse on a bomb “and then the fuse will burn up until the big bang and the big bang may be further down the line.”

While the ice sheets with several meters or yards of potential sea rise can reshape coastline over centuries, Rockstrom said to him the loss of coral reefs is his biggest concern because of the “immediate impacts on human livelihoods.” Hundreds of millions of people, especially poorer tropical area residents, depend on fisheries linked to the coral reefs, McKay said.

With just a few more tenths of a degree new tipping points become more possible and even likely that includes a slow down of northern polar ocean circulation that can ripple into dramatic weather changes especially in Europe, loss of certain areas of Arctic sea ice, glaciers collapsing worldwide and utter failure of the Amazon rain forest.

Some of these tipping points, like the permafrost thaw, add to and accelerate existing warming, but don’t think “it’s game over” if temperatures hit 1.5 degrees of warming, which is quite likely, McKay said.

“Even if we do hit some of those tipping points, it will still lock in really substantial impacts we want to avoid, but it doesn’t trigger some sort of runaway climate change process,” McKay said. “That’s not the case at 1.5 degrees. And that means that how much further warming occurs beyond 1.5 is still mostly within our power to effect.”

That’s a crucial point that these are tipping points for individual regional disasters not the planet as a whole, so it’s bad, but not world ending, said climate scientist Zeke Hausfather of the tech company Stripe and Berkeley Earth, who wasn’t part of the study, but said it was important nuanced research that quantified tipping points better than before.

“Have we really contemplated what happens when you mess with our global and ecological systems to that degree?” said University of Miami climate risk scientist Katharine Mach, who wasn’t part of the study. She said it shows ripples and cascades that are troublesome. “This is a profound reason for concern in a changing climate.”

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HEADLINE	09/08 Warning on severe climate ‘tipping points’
SOURCE	https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/08/climate/global-warming-climate-tipping-point.html
GIST	<p>Failure to limit global warming to the targets set by international accords will most likely set off several climate “tipping points,” a team of scientists said Thursday, with irreversible effects including the collapse of the Greenland and West Antarctic ice sheets, abrupt thawing of Arctic permafrost and the death of coral reefs.</p> <p>The researchers said that even at the current level of warming, about 1.1 degrees Celsius (2 degrees Fahrenheit) above preindustrial levels, some of these self-sustaining changes might have already begun. But if warming reached above 1.5 degrees Celsius, the more ambitious of two targets set by the 2015 Paris Agreement, the changes would become much more certain.</p> <p>And at the higher Paris target, 2 degrees Celsius, even more tipping points would likely be set off, including the loss of mountain glaciers and the collapse of a system of deep mixing of water in the North Atlantic.</p> <p>The changes would have significant, long-term effects on life on Earth. The collapse of the Greenland and West Antarctic ice sheets, for example, would lead to unrelenting sea level rise, measured in feet, not inches, over centuries. The thawing of permafrost would release more heat-trapping gases into the atmosphere, hindering efforts to limit warming. A shutdown of ocean mixing in the North Atlantic could affect global temperatures and bring more extreme weather to Europe.</p>

Johan Rockström, the director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research in Germany and one of the researchers, said the team had “come to the very dire conclusion that 1.5 degrees Celsius is a threshold” beyond which some of these effects would start. That makes it all the more imperative, he and others said, for nations to quickly and drastically cut emissions of carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping gases to curb global warming.

The research is in line with recent assessments by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, a group of experts convened by the United Nations, that beyond 1.5 degrees of warming, the threats of climate change grow considerably.

“It really provides strong scientific support for rapid emission cuts in line with the Paris Agreement,” said David Armstrong McKay, a climate scientist at the University of Exeter in Britain and the lead author of a paper describing the researchers’ work, published in *Science*. Limiting warming to 1.5 degrees “doesn’t guarantee we don’t see tipping points,” McKay said. “But it reduces the likelihood.”

And as with the U.N. panel’s assessments, overshooting the 1.5 degree target does not mean all is lost. “Every 10th of a degree counts,” Rockström said. “So 1.6 is better than 1.7 and so on” in reducing the tipping-point risks.

Countries have not pledged to cut greenhouse gas emissions enough to meet either Paris target, although the climate and energy legislation passed by Congress last month moves the United States much closer to its own goals. Current policies put the world on pace for nearly 3 degrees Celsius of warming by the end of the century. At that level of warming, even more tipping points would be set off, the researchers said.

The concept of climate tipping points has been around for decades. But it has also been accompanied by a high degree of uncertainty and debate, including about the threshold temperatures beyond which some changes would begin, and whether some of these events even meet the definition of changes that would be self-sustaining no matter what happens with future warming.

A major study in 2008 identified more than a dozen parts of Earth’s system that could reach a tipping point. The new research eliminated a few and added several more, identifying a total of 16 parts, including nine that would have global effects.

Among those eliminated, McKay said, was summer Arctic sea ice. Although ice extent has been steadily declining for decades, he said there was not any clear threshold beyond which the decline would become self-sustaining.

But the main goal of the new research, which reviewed studies that had used data from past climates, current observations and computer simulations, was to reduce the uncertainty about when the tipping points might be reached.

The study “puts temperature thresholds on all the tipping elements,” Rockström said. “That has never been done before.”

Thomas Stocker, a climate scientist at the University of Bern in Switzerland who was not involved in the study, cautioned that much more research was needed on the subject of tipping points. “It’s not the ultimate word,” he said of the study’s findings. “It’s a contribution to an important conversation that is ongoing.”

What is needed, Stocker said, is a comprehensive analysis by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, perhaps as part of the next round of assessments, which is due in the second half of this decade.

Rockström agreed that more research was needed. “I’m hoping that the IPCC will take this scientific assessment on board,” he said.

	<p>The Potsdam institute and the University of Exeter are also sponsoring a conference next week designed to encourage more work on the subject. Among other projects, Rockström said, is one to improve modeling of these cataclysmic events.</p> <p>“We’re in a much better position now than just a few years back to advance a real initiative on tipping point research,” he said.</p>
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HEADLINE	09/08 Rising seas threaten millions of US acres
SOURCE	https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2022/09/08/sea-level-rise-climate-central/
GIST	<p>The water is coming.</p> <p>There’s no longer much doubt about that, as scientists have increasingly documented how the warming of the planet has accelerated sea level rise along coasts around the world.</p> <p>But a new analysis published Thursday by the research nonprofit Climate Central reveals a troubling dimension of the economic toll that could unfold in the U.S., as hundreds of thousands of homes, offices and other privately owned properties slip below swelling tide lines over the next few decades.</p> <p>Here are five take-aways from the research about the people and places that stand to lose most, the likely ripple effects and reasons the world must cut its emissions of greenhouse gases to eventually stem the rising waters.</p> <p>—</p> <p>1. Sea level rise will shift coastlines — and property lines</p> <p>Researchers at Climate Central took scientific data on projected sea level rise, as well as information about state tidal boundaries, and combined that with records on more than 50 million individual properties across hundreds of U.S. counties to identify parcels most likely at risk.</p> <p>Their conclusion: Nearly 650,000 individual, privately owned parcels, across as many as 4.4 million acres of land, are projected to fall below changing tidal boundaries by 2050. The land affected could swell to 9.1 million acres by 2100. According to Thursday’s analysis, properties with a collective assessed value of \$108 billion could be affected by the end of the century, based on current emissions. But, the authors noted, because complete property values were not available for all counties, the actual total is likely to be far higher.</p> <p>The changes also could come gradually at first, then quickly. In many communities, the authors wrote, structures are clustered in areas that historically are on safe ground. But once rising seas reach those densely developed elevations, “the number of affected buildings sharply increases.”</p> <p>“As the sea is rising, tide lines are moving up elevation, upslope and inland,” said Don Bain, a senior adviser at Climate Central and an expert in sea level rise, who led the analysis. “People really haven’t internalized that yet — that ‘Hey, I’m going to have something taken away from me by the sea.’ “</p> <p>—</p> <p>2. The Gulf Coast and Atlantic Coast stand to lose most</p> <p>It’s no surprise that Louisiana, where the seas are swelling and land is sinking, faces a daunting loss of property in the years to come.</p> <p>The Climate Central analysis estimated that more than 25,000 properties totaling nearly 2.5 million acres in the state could fall wholly below tidal boundary lines by 2050 — a number that far exceeds any other place in the nation. That would amount to 8.7% of Louisiana’s total land area, the report found.</p> <p>But other states also appear to face widespread threats. The top three at risk behind Louisiana are Florida, North Carolina and Texas, all of which have large swaths of low-lying, imperiled coastlines.</p>

While property across the Southeast might face the most collective risk, other states also have reason for concern. New Jersey and New York, for instance, also stand to see thousands of properties fall below tidelines in coming decades. Same for Maryland, which the researchers project could see more than 2,500 buildings impacted.

The effects of sea level rise already are evident, as some communities face the prospect of retreat and a growing number grapple with nuisance or “sunny day” flooding.

Eventually, such issues will “transition from something that’s rare to becoming something that’s normal,” said William Sweet, an oceanographer at the NOAA National Ocean Service and the nation’s top scientist on sea level rise.

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3. It’s not just about flooded homes. It’s about eroding tax bases.

The loss of homes and other properties — especially those along the waterfront — isn’t just a tragedy for owners. It is a surefire way to erode the revenue municipal governments need to operate.

“Ultimately, this is a local problem and a local story,” Bain said. “We finance local government through our property taxes.”

If sea levels continue to rise unabated, that poses more than just a problem to beaches and condos that line the coasts. It eventually will translate into fewer taxable properties, and less money to fund schools and fire departments, fix roads, maintain sewers and provide other essential services.

“Diminished property values and a smaller tax base can lead to lower tax revenue and reduced public services — a potential downward spiral of disinvestment and population decline, reduced tax base and public services, and so on,” Thursday’s analysis found.

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4. The potential ripple effects are vast.

Eroding tax bases are a big problem. But hardly the only one. The study also found a litany of other complications that likely will result as sea levels inch higher and higher.

“The legal and political ramifications of these changes are complex, and will likely vary among locations,” the analysis found. “Those ramifications extend well beyond loss of tax revenue as property owners object to paying taxes on submerged land.”

Beyond those initial shocks, municipalities and individuals will also be forced to confront the significant costs for removing inundated structures and flooded septic tanks. Governments could be on the hook for properties that get abandoned, adding additional expenses not covered by their budgets.

But even before then, communities already are wrestling with the need to repair streets and roads damaged by flooding, as well as overwhelmed or outdated sewer and water systems. “How city and county management teams respond to these risks, or if they respond at all, is material to the city’s and county’s future ability to repay debt and protect its credit rating,” the authors wrote.

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5. The future is not (entirely) set in stone.

The world’s foremost scientists have found that given the carbon built up in the atmosphere after generations of burning fossil fuels, the rate of sea level rise is increasing and will continue over the next several decades.

Those findings are in line with a major report earlier this year from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which found that sea levels could rise along U.S. coastlines by roughly a foot between now and 2050 — roughly as much change over the next three decades as over the past century.

“That trajectory appears somewhat set,” said Sweet, who was not involved in Thursday’s study.

	<p>What remains undetermined is how communities across the United States prepare for the changes they know are coming, and what this country and others do to slow the heating of the planet.</p> <p>“If we get our act together, we can get to a lower curve, and that buys us time,” Bain said. “We don’t want [seas] rising so fast that it outpaces our capacity to adapt.”</p> <p>Sweet said the data from NOAA and related efforts, such as Thursday’s study, hopefully give public officials and individuals information they need “so they can make the smart choices to best defend and prepare against rising seas” — from shoring up infrastructure to making thoughtful decisions about development.</p> <p>But ultimately, he said, the world must act in concert to make sure the problem doesn’t grow worse indefinitely.</p> <p>“Emissions matter, especially as we get beyond the next 20 or 30 years,” Sweet said. “You reduce emissions, you reduce your likelihood of higher sea levels.”</p>
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Crime, Criminals

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HEADLINE	09/08 Pot farm raids uncover human trafficking
SOURCE	https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/raids-black-market-cannabis-farms-uncover-human-trafficking-victims-rcna46787
GIST	<p>MOJAVE DESERT, Calif. — As more states legalize cannabis, law enforcement officials say they are seeing an uptick in black market operators using suspected human trafficking victims to grow and trim marijuana sold in legal dispensaries.</p> <p>But authorities and advocates say helping these victims can be complicated because many don't admit to being trafficked and are unwilling to work with law enforcement agencies to take down smugglers and dealers.</p> <p>Nine of those suspected victims were arrested during an early morning raid in May in California's Mojave Desert. The cannabis workers, all Chinese nationals who had traveled from New York, attempted to flee as law enforcement officials executed a search warrant on the secluded farm.</p> <p>Speaking through a Mandarin translator, one woman said she found the job through a Chinese website. Some listings reviewed by NBC News did not mention specific salaries, and others said they could be negotiated in person.</p> <p>“I have no money. What hope do I have?” said a worker named Jin, who asked to be identified only by his first name.</p> <p>All the workers apprehended said they had previously been employed in restaurants before making the trek west; several said they were eager to return to relatives on the East Coast. None had been paid for their labor and they were living in cramped, uncomfortable trailers near the illegal grow operation.</p> <p>A worker named Fang, who also asked to be identified only by her first name, said she left her 8-year-old son behind in New York.</p> <p>“It’s very dirty, it’s very messy,” she said of the trailer where she had been sleeping.</p> <p>When asked if she had been told the truth about the kind of work she would be undertaking, Fang said no.</p>

Fang, Jin and the other workers were charged with misdemeanors and later released, according to the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department. The workers had been tending to 25 greenhouses, where law enforcement officials said they recovered about 1,000 pounds of processed marijuana. The facility likely generated \$8 million in revenue quarterly, officials said.

None of the workers said they had been trafficked, but law enforcement officials said they suspected otherwise.

"It's common for them to not give up any information on their trafficker, to tell us that they feel safe, because, ultimately, we believe they're in fear of their own safety if they say anything other than that to us," said Sgt. James Roy of the Riverside County Sheriff's Department.

Attorney Xiaosheng Huang, who represents trafficking victims, said many of his clients were exploited during the pandemic after losing jobs in the hospitality industry. Desperate and owing money to the people who smuggled them into the United States, they sought employment anywhere they could find it, including illegal grow operations in California, Washington, Oklahoma and New Mexico.

In the last year alone, law enforcement officials in San Bernardino County have shut down nearly 1,100 illegal grow locations and more than 8,600 greenhouses, the sheriff's department said in a statement. This includes seizing more than 1.4 million cannabis plants, 97 tons of processed marijuana and 175 pounds of concentrated cannabis with an estimated street value of \$1 billion.

Other law enforcement investigations in Los Angeles and Riverside counties pushed illegal cannabis seizures in the last year to more than \$1 billion, the California Department of Cannabis Control said in a recent statement.

"This important milestone was reached through close collaboration with local, state, and federal partners and furthers California's efforts to go after activities that harm communities and the environment, including water theft, threats of violence, elder abuse, and human trafficking to name a few," the department's director, Nicole Elliott, said in the statement.

California's recreational cannabis program was created, in part, to curb the black market and weaken drug cartels' stranglehold on the crop. But burdensome taxes and high costs of entry have created a crisis within the increasingly unstable market, which has been flooded in recent years by illicit growers and dealers selling their cannabis at cheaper prices.

Gov. Gavin Newsom eliminated the "cultivation tax" on growers earlier this year but counties will still be able to impose their own such tax, which many in the industry call the single most burdensome fee attached to growing marijuana legally.

A year ago, cultivators could get about \$1,000 a pound wholesale, but with the market saturated and supply higher than demand, it has dropped to \$300 or lower.

In many ways, California's legalization push faced challenges from the start. The state's illegal market had flourished for decades, stubbornly anchored in the "Emerald Triangle" of far Northern California. Driven by cartels from Mexico and China, the black market has since expanded to other parts of the state, including rural areas of Southern California.

"If you look at the number of legalized grow locations for the state, there's not enough of those to funnel product for the legal dispensaries," said Lt. Marc Bracco of the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department. "Over 70 or 80% of marijuana at your dispensary is illegally cultivated."

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HEADLINE	09/08 Growing thefts of Kia, Hyundai vehicles
SOURCE	https://www.wsj.com/articles/police-car-owners-wrestle-with-growing-thefts-of-kias-hyundais-11662638401?mod=hp_trending_now_article_pos2

Darby Solmos was heading to work on a recent evening when she couldn't find her 2013 Kia Sportage in the underground garage of her Denver apartment building.

The 28-year-old nurse had recently gotten the car back from the shop to repair damage from would-be thieves who had broken in earlier in the summer and ripped apart the steering column. This time, the thieves didn't fail. "The car was just gone," she said.

Ms. Solmos had become another victim of a surge of Kia and Hyundai thefts across the U.S. The cars aren't being stolen to make money, according to law enforcement. Police say the thefts have been fueled by social-media challenges targeting certain models of the cars because they are so easy to steal. They typically are used for joy riding or to commit other crimes.

The issue affects some models of Kia built between 2011 and 2021 and certain models of Hyundai between 2016 and 2021.

Police from Atlanta to Seattle have warned about increases in thefts of the cars, which are equipped with traditional keys and can be quickly stolen in part because they, unlike many others, lack a chip that would prevent them from starting when the key isn't present. In Chicago, 601 Kias and Hyundais were reported stolen in August, compared with 58 in August 2021, according to data released by the Cook County Sheriff's Office.

"It really took off the last two months and now it's exploded. I mean, the numbers are staggering," said Cook County Sheriff Tom Dart.

In St. Louis, 3,970 motor vehicles have been reported stolen this year through Aug. 29, up from 3,784 for all of last year, according to the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department. Of the cars stolen this year, 48% were Kias or Hyundais, compared with 7% of the total in 2021.

St. Louis officials last month sent a letter threatening legal action against the two car makers if they didn't take steps to help solve the problem, saying the vehicles are being used in crimes and making the city less safe.

The companies are also facing lawsuits seeking class-action status by owners in several states, alleging that the cars are defective. Hyundai Motor Co., based in Seoul, owns about a third of Kia Corp.

The companies say they are aware that social-media campaigns are targeting certain years and models of their cars. They say more recent versions of the models are equipped with a device called an immobilizer matched to a key with a chip that makes them harder to steal. They declined to comment on the pending litigation.

"While no car can be made theft-proof, criminals are seeking vehicles solely equipped with a steel key and 'turn-to-start' ignition system," Kia America said in a statement.

"The majority of Kia vehicles in the United States are equipped with a key fob and 'push-button-to-start' system, making them more difficult to steal."

Both companies said they have given away wheel locks to police to distribute to owners of the cars. Hyundai said it was offering a security upgrade that consumers would be able to buy at its dealers at an undisclosed price starting in October.

Milwaukee was one of the first cities hit by a wave of Kia and Hyundai thefts and is thought to be the base of groups such as the Kia Boys that made viral videos showing how to steal the vehicles—and encouraging others to do so. Social-media companies, including TikTok and YouTube, said they remove such videos, which violate their policies.

In late 2020, with many routine social activities shut down by the pandemic, police began noticing the trend, said Milwaukee Police Chief Jeffrey Norman.

Police also found that teenagers and young adults were organizing into groups, putting out how-to videos on social media, creating songs and issuing challenges to others, he said. “That really took hold of the young adults in our community as a game,” he said.

Police fought back by increasing enforcement, informing the community of the risks and giving away antitheft devices, he said. The department is also starting a program that encourages motorists to put a sticker on their vehicle granting police permission to pull it over if it is being driven between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m., when most thefts occur.

In Milwaukee, the trend seems to be on the wane. Overall car thefts there fell 17% to 5,813 through Aug. 31 this year, compared with the same period in 2021, according to police data. Thefts of Kias and Hyundais are also down 22% and 36% respectively for this year so far, the data show. Overall thefts had jumped 183% to 7,027 in the first eight months of 2021, compared with the same period in 2020.

After thieves had tried to steal Ms. Solmos’s car the first time, it cost about \$1,000 to get it running again, half of which was covered by insurance, she said.

She and her husband arranged for a new parking spot in their building’s garage with better light and better access to security cameras, but it didn’t seem to bother the next set of thieves.

When she went to check out the damage at an impound lot after police recovered the car, it was totaled and littered with drug paraphernalia, she said. “The car was trashed with their belongings and not in a driveable state, so it’s my insurance company’s problem to deal with now,” she said.

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HEADLINE	09/08 Ukraine uncovers child sex abuse network
SOURCE	https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/sep/08/ukraine-police-uncover-child-sexual-abuse-ring-involving-russian-children
GIST	<p>Ukrainian police have uncovered a sprawling child sexual abuse network, involving dozens of Russian children whose images and videos were allegedly traded inside and outside the country, but said it was impossible to pursue the case further because of the war.</p> <p>A Ukrainian man has been arrested and 15 children, all Russians currently residing in Russia, identified, but prosecutors in the Kyiv region have said they are not able to trace other victims or arrest other suspects because of the severing of Russia-Ukraine relations since the Kremlin’s invasion.</p> <p>“These kinds of crimes are unfortunately common everywhere, in Ukraine and Europe,” said Oleh Tkalenko, a senior prosecutor for the Kyiv region, who led the investigation. “But what terrifies us is the large scale of these crimes in Russia.”</p> <p>“The victims of these crimes are the most vulnerable segments of the population,” Tkalenko said. “Parents who push their children to do this are extremely poor. And it’s really hard to stop these files from spreading. And it’s really frustrating because, due to the conflict, all our contacts with Russian colleagues have been cut.”</p> <p>The investigation began in June, when the Ukrainian police’s cybercrime unit received information that a large number of child sexual abuse images were being downloaded and stored in the Kyiv region.</p> <p>Prosecutors a month later searched a house in Bucha where files containing more than 100,000 images and videos of child sexual abuse were found.</p>

“We immediately tried to identify the children and victims of these crimes who were involved in the network,” Tkalenko said. “And we were shocked when we found out that they were all Russian citizens. We have identified 15 of them so far, but we are talking of dozens of children involved.”

Some of the victims were as young as nine years of age and came from various areas of Russia, including Moscow, Kaliningrad and Krasnodar.

The suspect has been placed under house arrest by judges pending a verdict. If convicted, the man faces up to five years in prison.

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HEADLINE	09/08 Saskatchewan murders: why?
SOURCE	https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/08/world/canada/canada-stabbings-saskatchewan.html
GIST	<p>JAMES SMITH CREE NATION, Saskatchewan — The hunt for the killer behind the rampage that killed 10 people in Western Canada ended on Highway 11, a rural Saskatchewan roadway surrounded by dusty fields.</p> <p>The Royal Canadian Mounted Police had run the fugitive’s stolen white truck off the road after chasing it at speeds of more than 90 m.p.h. Then they surrounded the suspect and captured him.</p> <p>It was over.</p> <p>Four days after the tight-knit community was horrified by the spasm of brutality, Myles Sanderson was in police custody. On the Indigenous reserve where most of the violence played out, residents rejoiced at the news. But their celebration at the prospect of a killer facing justice was short-lived.</p> <p>Hours after the arrest, the authorities issued a stunning announcement: Mr. Sanderson had died in police custody under unexplained circumstances. A knife had been found in the truck after his arrest, they said, and it appeared that he was in “medical distress.”</p> <p>As the sun set Wednesday, visitors could still see skid marks from the car chase on the road where the suspect was caught, and police lights flashing on a quiet prairie night.</p> <p>The reserve and the community around it in the western Canadian province of Saskatchewan are no strangers to crime, even murder, much of it tied to the crystal meth trade, residents say. But the authorities there have rarely seen anything like the events that began in the predawn hours Sunday, when Myles, 32, and his brother Damien, 31, embarked on the attacks, which also wounded 18.</p> <p>Hundreds of police officers scoured 13 separate crime scenes for evidence and dozens of witnesses were interviewed. All the while, the officers were conducting a manhunt for the brothers. Damien was found stabbed to death on Monday.</p> <p>As investigators proceed, the outline of what happened at the reserve, James Smith Cree Nation, has begun to fill in. More questions are being answered. The police, for example, now believe that Myles, long a community outcast, killed most of the victims, aided by his brother. Many in the community also believe they know what happened to Damien: Myles, they say, appears to have killed him for trying to end the rampage.</p> <p>But with both brothers dead, many questions may never be answered, especially the biggest: Why?</p> <p>“We may never have an understanding of that motivation,” said Assistant Commissioner Rhonda Blackmore, the chief officer of the mounted police in Saskatchewan.</p> <p>But one thing is clear: It all began around 5:40 a.m., as many in the Indigenous reserve were still asleep.</p>

Residents recall waking up to the news that Myles Sanderson, a parolee who was six foot one and 240 pounds, and had a well-demonstrated appetite for fighting, was kicking down doors and stabbing people. As panic and fear spread across the reserve, residents fetched their guns and barricaded their doors with tables and chairs.

Tyrel Sanderson said the day began with frantic calls from his mother and other family members. They wanted to make sure he was all right. "They told me that there was a mass murder happening," he recalled.

Tyrel knew Myles Sanderson, a relative and old schoolmate — the whole reserve did. A high school dropout, he had 59 criminal convictions and a long history of substance abuse.

"He was the kind of person people stayed away from," Tyrel said.

Theories have swirled around the community about what set Mr. Sanderson off that day, but Tyrel said he suspected that drugs, alcohol and gang-related violence had played a role, a refrain heard across the reserve.

"These acts of violence have to stop and they have to stop now," the reserve's chief, Wally Burns, said on Thursday, struggling for words. "We're going to protect our community, fight against drugs and alcohol." He called on the province and the federal government to establish an Indigenous police force on the reserve, to expand substance abuse programs and to set up a long-term recovery center.

Residents of the reserve said Mr. Sanderson, who was released from custody earlier this year, had fought with many people in the community. Known as a grudge holder, he appeared to be settling scores on Sunday, though some of his victims appear to have been chosen at random.

Among the people he killed was Earl Burns, 66, a veteran and bus driver whose daughter was Mr. Sanderson's common-law wife. It was the second time Mr. Sanderson stabbed him; the first was in 2015.

On Sunday, residents say, after he was stabbed, Mr. Burns managed to board his yellow bus and head to the village for help, but did not make it. His bus veered off the road into a ditch.

Myles and his common-law wife had five children, and according to his court records, he had repeatedly abused and threatened her. The Parole Board of Canada ordered him not to contact her or the children, but he appeared determined to get back together with her after prison.

Mr. Sanderson attacked other residents of the reserve, among them Gloria Burns, 61, one of six members of the same extended family to lose their lives in the rampage. Ms. Burns, who counseled people dealing with drug and alcohol problems and had raised five adopted children as a single mother, was reported to have been killed coming to the aid of others.

Lana Head, 49, a security guard and mother of two daughters, was also among the dead.

In all, nine people were killed on the reserve, the oldest of them retirees and the youngest age 23. In the village part of the reserve, one or both brothers killed people in two homes, then forced their way into a house nearby. There they found a man with his 1-year-old son, and made him hand over the keys to his black Nissan S.U.V.

The next stop was Weldon, a sleepy village of 160 people about a 20-minute drive from the reserve. It is unclear whether Damien went to Weldon — his body was later found on the reserve dead from wounds that the police said were not self-inflicted. But however it happened, in Weldon, there was another killing.

There, in a home at the end of a quiet street, Wesley Petterson became the last victim. He was also the oldest. At age 78, he was known as an avid bird lover and an advocate for tree preservation. Anna Ballingall, a neighbor and friend who lives a few doors down, said Mr. Petterson had lost his wife to cancer and a daughter to a car accident.

Ms. Ballingall herself appears to have had a close call. When she arrived home after spending the night at the care facility where she works, she discovered that her garage door had been tampered with. When she called the police, she said, she was told it was likely that Mr. Sanderson had tried to break in. The police say that Mr. Sanderson appeared to have been injured and that he broke into a car in Weldon and stole a first aid kit.

“My biggest fear used to be running into a bobcat at night,” Ms. Ballingall said, standing outside her house, next to her large garden of squash and tomato plants. “It’s taken our innocence.”

On Thursday, at a news conference on the reserve, Darryl Burns, whose sister Gloria was among the dead, brought Damien Sanderson’s widow, Sky Cloud Sanderson, up to the microphone and asked her to accept the forgiveness of the community for her husband’s role in the killings.

“Damien was caught up in a life,” Mr. Burns said. “Damien was caught up in a moment.”

Sky Cloud Sanderson broke down in uncontrolled sobbing.

Ivor Wayne Burns, a community elder who was also a brother of Gloria Burns, said he forgave the killers.

“We forgive them,” he said, “because if we don’t, our anger will turn to hate and resentment and we will never heal. To move on, we have to forgive them boys.”

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HEADLINE	09/08 Memphis renewed attention on violence
SOURCE	https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/08/us/memphis-shooting-gun-violence.html
GIST	<p>MEMPHIS — Memphis had already been on edge. Just days earlier, a kindergarten teacher had been abducted on an early morning jog in the city and was later found dead.</p> <p>But on Wednesday, the city felt paralyzed. That night, a gunman set off a frenzied manhunt with a string of shootings that left a trail of bloodshed across Memphis, killing four people, wounding three others and causing widespread alarm until he was cornered by the police and taken into custody.</p> <p>Now, the day after the rampage, fear had settled into fury, stoking a renewed sense of anger and concern over violence in Memphis.</p> <p>“I’m angry that our citizens had to shelter in place for their own safety until the suspect was caught,” Jim Strickland, the mayor of Memphis, said in a news conference on Thursday. “This is no way for us to live, and it is not acceptable.”</p> <p>Memphis has long struggled with chronic poverty and crime and is often ranked among the nation’s most violent cities. Its troubles have intensified in recent years. In 2021, the city had a record number of killings, with 346. In 2022, the violent crime rate compared with last year’s has only marginally improved, according to police statistics.</p> <p>The recent violence has inflamed tensions over crime and policing, prompting calls for bolstering the city’s police force. It has also stirred broader fears about how violence and crime are undermining the city’s development.</p>

“I think people are overwhelmed,” Chase Carlisle, a city councilman, said in an interview on Thursday, “and I think they’re scared, and I think they’re looking for answers as to why this is happening and how do we curb it.”

Police officials said the violence had started after midnight on Wednesday, when a gunman shot and killed a 24-year-old man in a driveway. But the most intense period started after 4 p.m., when the Memphis police reported two shootings by the same gunman in nearby locations. In one, a man was found fatally shot in his car, the police said, and at the other, a woman had been shot in the leg.

More than an hour later, the police said, the gunman, identified by the authorities as Ezekiel Kelly — who was then streaming live on Facebook — charged into an auto-parts store and opened fire, critically wounding one man there. The gunman then fatally shot a woman during a carjacking. After that, he fatally shot another woman and wounded a man, the police said. The gunman then stole another vehicle at gunpoint in Southaven, a Memphis suburb just over the state line in Mississippi.

The police then pursued Mr. Kelly in a high-speed chase that led him back into Memphis, where he was arrested shortly after 9 p.m., officials said.

“This has been a horrific week for the city of Memphis and the Memphis Police Department,” the police chief, Cerelyn Davis, said during a news conference in which she detailed the harrowing chain of events on Wednesday.

Chief Davis also noted the anguish still rippling through Memphis after the killing of Eliza Fletcher, the 34-year-old teacher and mother of two who had been abducted. Ms. Fletcher had last been seen on Sept. 2.

She had been out jogging near the campus of the University of Memphis, near the heart of the city; the authorities said that she had been forced into an S.U.V. Days later, her body was found behind a vacant duplex apartment in South Memphis, about seven miles from where she had been taken, the police said.

In that case, one man, Cleotha Abston, 38, was charged with first-degree murder, as well as with kidnapping-related offenses.

“Our city is hurting,” Karen D. Camper, a state lawmaker representing Memphis, said in a statement.

“There is a long road ahead and much work ahead for us to do in order to begin to heal our city,” said Ms. Camper, the Democratic leader in the State House of Representatives. “And we will have those policy discussions.”

The violence has invigorated debates over residency rules for the Police Department, with some pushing for them to be loosened considering the vacancies on the force. Others also expressed outrage over Mr. Kelly’s release from prison earlier this year.

Mr. Kelly, 19, had been charged in 2020 with attempted first-degree murder, possession of a firearm and reckless endangerment with a deadly weapon. Mayor Strickland said Mr. Kelly had been sentenced to three years in prison after pleading guilty to a lesser charge, aggravated assault, but had been released in March after serving 11 months.

In a post on Twitter, Mr. Carlisle said that he had seen and heard lots of chatter from people saying the time had come to leave the city, that their angst and anger over the city’s climate were nearing a breaking point. “I’ll never tell anyone how to feel,” he wrote. “But I want you to stay.”

He said that Memphis was not alone, as other American cities also wrestle with increases in crime. In 2020, Memphis was one of several cities — along with Kansas City, Mo.; Cleveland; and Detroit — chosen by the administration of former President Donald J. Trump for infusions of federal law enforcement officers.

Still, Mr. Carlisle acknowledged the gravity of what his city was confronting. The turmoil over crime was especially clear as the rampage unfolded on Wednesday night, as he saw the alerts and was bombarded by text messages from scared residents.

During that time, the Memphis Area Transit Authority halted bus and trolley service. The University of Memphis locked down its campus. The Memphis Police Department blasted out urgent bulletins on social media: “If you do not have to be out, stay indoors until this is resolved.”

As he wrangled carts outside a supermarket, Terry Taliaferro, 60, said the Wednesday night violence that had pinged across the Memphis area didn’t make sense — no rhyme and certainly no reason. “Used to be there were bad neighborhoods you stayed out of,” he said.

“I don’t understand it,” Mr. Taliaferro added. “He was just shooting people.”

Lawrence Matthews was at home in his garage working on set pieces for an upcoming music performance when he got a text from a friend about the gunman. His first thought: Get some takeout for dinner before the roads got too crowded with police personnel.

“I was disturbed, but I was like, this is always happening,” Mr. Matthews said, noting on Wednesday that white and more affluent areas of the city were just seeing the kind of threat that he believed was much more common in poorer neighborhoods that had not received the same level of concern. “The only difference is it’s happening in Midtown.”

“These symptoms of poverty that is Memphis-wide that they choose to ignore,” he added, “are now creeping into their area and the places that they do champion.”

But as much as he worried about apathy and that residents would give up on the city, Mr. Carlisle, the city councilman, also maintained his optimism. Memphis had weathered a lot. He knew the city’s resilience.

“Memphis will endure,” Mr. Carlisle said, and so, too, will many of the residents who remain invested in building up the city. “We’re not going anywhere,” he said. “Memphis is home.”

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HEADLINE	09/09 Cold cases cracked; decades no answers
SOURCE	https://www.foxnews.com/us/cold-cases-cracked-experts-solving-hundreds-violent-crime-mysteries-decades-no-answers
GIST	<p>On the evening of Dec. 5, 1975, Lindy Sue Biechler's aunt and uncle returned home to find their 19-year-old niece with a knife sticking out of her neck and signs of a struggle in the blood-splattered entrance way of the house in Manor Township, Pennsylvania.</p> <p>Investigators combed through the grisly scene and continued re-examining the evidence for decades to no avail. Male DNA was obtained from Biechler's underwear in 1997, but investigators didn't receive a hit when they submitted it to the nationwide law enforcement database, CODIS.</p> <p>In 2019, the Lancaster County District Attorney’s Cold Case unit enlisted the help of CeCe Moore, the chief genetic genealogist at Parabon NanoLabs, which used cutting-edge DNA analysis and traditional genealogy to identify 68-year-old David Sinopoli as the suspect.</p> <p>In February 2022, investigators stealthily obtained fresh DNA from a coffee cup that Sinopoli threw into the trash as he traveled to Philadelphia International Airport.</p> <p>That DNA was compared to blood taken from the victim's pantyhose, which came back as a match in June, and Sinopoli was arrested at his home the next month in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. He is now facing criminal homicide charges.</p>

After nearly five decades, Biechler's family is starting to receive closure thanks to a burgeoning new field of forensic science called investigative genetic genealogy, which combines cutting-edge DNA analysis and traditional genealogy to uncover decades-old secrets and crack the coldest of cases.

Moore, the [genetic genealogist](#) at Parabon NanoLabs who helped identify Sinopoli as the suspect, has been a pioneer in the field since the 2000s, originally focusing on non-criminal human identification cases, such as helping adoptees find their biological families.

Even then, Moore and others knew these groundbreaking techniques could be used to help solve the most gruesome crimes.

"If you can identify someone's birth parents, if you can identify someone that's abandoned with no information, if you can identify an amnesiac, of course you would be able to identify a killer, a rapist, a Jane Doe," Moore told Fox News Digital.

The 2018 arrest of 74-year-old Joseph James DeAngelo — a former police officer known as the [Golden State Killer](#) who was responsible for at least a dozen murders and as many as 50 rapes in the 1970s and 1980s — served as a proof-of-concept for law enforcement that this new forensic science could help uncover secrets that have eluded them for decades.

"The Golden State killer arrest and identification was a watershed moment because that's what really opened people's eyes to the power of genetic genealogy on an international level," Moore said.

The case opened the floodgates, with [law enforcement agencies](#) around the country contacting Moore and other genetic genealogists for help cracking cold cases. Since then, Moore and the team at Parabon have identified more than 200 violent criminals.

The scientists at Parabon use autosomal DNA single nucleotide polymorphisms, also known as SNPs (pronounced like "snips"), to identify possible distant relatives of an unknown subject by comparing that person's DNA sample to hundreds of thousands of others in a public genetic database, such as GEDmatch or FamilyTreeDNA.

From there, Moore and her team will reverse engineer the unknown person's family tree in an effort to identify that subject using traditional genealogy.

"I've got to figure out: who is this match, who are [their parents](#), and build that family tree," Moore said.

"That sometimes means reading obituaries, reading newspaper articles, looking at social media, figuring out who these people's parents are and then their grandparents. Once I get far enough back, I can start using those traditional genealogical records that you might find on Ancestry.com or on Familysearch.org, but there's a lot of creativity that has to go into it."

The DNA Doe Project, which focuses on identifying Jane and John Does, sometimes is able to use a voluntary target uploader — a potential relative of [a missing person](#) who uploads their DNA sample from a commercial site like 23andMe to a public database like GEDmatch to help investigators build out a clearer family tree.

"These people have family and friends and loved ones that are missing, so usually, when it comes to our mission, people are really motivated to help, and they're happy to upload to GEDmatch," DNA Doe Project team leader Cairenn Binder told Fox News Digital.

Just two weeks before the Golden State Killer was arrested by law enforcement in California, the DNA Doe Project successfully [identified the "Buckskin Girl"](#) as Marcia King, a 21-year-old woman who was murdered in April 1981.

It was one of the first victims ever identified using genetic genealogy. Since then, detectives from the Miami County Sheriff's Office in Ohio have worked to reconstruct what led up to her murder more than 40 years ago with the hopes of identifying a suspect.

"If you don't know who somebody is, how do you know who killed them?" Binder said. "The vast majority of people who are murdered are killed by people that know them, that are in their friends and family. So, if you have a homicide victim and you don't have their identification, then that doesn't give law enforcement a good place to start with investigating their killing."

While genetic genealogy has proved to be a remarkable advancement in finding long searched for answers, [privacy advocates](#) have taken issue with its potential for civil rights violations.

"Now is the time for legislators, the courts and law enforcement to ensure that the benefits of genetic-science technology don't come at the cost of our privacy rights," Vera Eidelman, a staff attorney with the ACLU's Speech, Privacy, and Technology Project, wrote after the Golden State Killer was arrested. "Blockbuster investigations, as gratifying as they are, shouldn't obscure the very real dangers of government access to sensitive information."

The most popular at-home genetic testing companies do not allow genetic genealogists to access their databases, and law enforcement can only pull a DNA profile with a warrant.

These privacy concerns are legitimate and have been at the forefront of genetic genealogists' minds since the beginning of the booming field, Moore said.

"I, at the time, was hesitant to start doing this work because I wanted to make sure it was something positive and that people didn't see it as a betrayal or a privacy issue," Moore said.

"I've had hundreds of people come to me, thousands of people probably, entrust me with their family mysteries, with their secrets," she continued. "I have seen how sensitive people are about their DNA, understandably, right? It's something that is so personal to us."

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HEADLINE	09/08 Georgia: 2 deputies killed serving warrant
SOURCE	https://abcnews.go.com/US/sheriffs-deputies-killed-serving-warrant-suspect-barricaded-police/story?id=89567167
GIST	<p>Two Cobb County Sheriff's deputies have been killed while serving a warrant, and a suspect is barricaded, officials said Thursday night.</p> <p>"Two @CobbSheriff deputies died tonight in the line of duty while serving a warrant," the sheriff's office tweeted. "SWAT and FAST teams are at the scene. The suspect is barricaded."</p> <p>"We will release additional information, including the names of the fallen deputies, as it becomes available," the office added.</p> <p>The sheriff's office tweeted just before 9:50 p.m. ET that it "remains an active incident," and that no additional information is available at this time.</p>
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HEADLINE	09/08 Police: shooting at Uvalde park, 2 injured
SOURCE	https://abcnews.go.com/US/uvalde-police-investigating-shooting-injured-victims-memorial-park/story?id=89560553
GIST	Two victims have been air-lifted to San Antonio Memorial Hospital following a shooting Thursday in Uvalde, Texas, police said.

The Uvalde Police Department [said](#) it responded to a shooting "with injured victims" at [Uvalde](#) Memorial Park around 5:30 p.m. Thursday.

This was a suspected gang-related shooting, the Texas Department of Public Safety said, adding that it was working with the police department and sheriff's office.

"This information is preliminary, as the situation develops we will work with local law enforcement to provide updates," DPS said.

San Antonio ABC affiliate KSAT reported that police said two juveniles have been hospitalized following the shooting, and authorities are looking for a juvenile suspect.

Authorities said it's "not a dangerous situation for the general public," KSAT reported.

Uvalde police advised residents to avoid the area.

More than three months ago, on May 24, 19 students and two teachers were killed in a shooting massacre at Robb Elementary School. Just this week, on Tuesday, students returned to the classroom for the school year.

"I was outraged to learn that gang violence has endangered the Uvalde community and innocent Texans this evening," Gov. Greg Abbott said in a statement Thursday night. "I immediately called Mayor [Don] McLaughlin and County Judge [William] Mitchell to offer the state's full support and resources as law enforcement hunts down the gang members."

The governor said he directed DPS to "conduct patrol operations in the gang hotspots," and send six additional trooper units and begin an anti-gang effort in Uvalde.

"Working with the Uvalde Police Department and Uvalde County Sheriff's Office, DPS is also deploying Special Agents to target the five gangs operating in Uvalde," he added. "Thank you to all local and state law enforcement and first responders who swiftly went into action to protect their fellow Texans. Gang violence has no place here in Texas, and we will bring the full force of justice down on these heinous criminals."

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